

## SME MONITOR

### MONSHA'AT QUARTERLY REPORT Q2 2025

#### Inside this report:

- › Quarterly highlights from the ecosystem and Monsha'at
- › Initiatives supporting SME growth
- › Exclusive interviews with leading experts and entrepreneurs
- › Regional Focus: Riyadh
- › Education SMEs on the rise: Unlocking opportunities and navigating growth

# H.E. Yousef bin Abdullah Al-Benyan

Minister  
Ministry of Education



وزارة التعليم  
Ministry of Education



Education and vocational training represent one of the most vital sectors to the Kingdom's future. They are the foundation for building human capital, driving national development, strengthening the economy, and enhancing Saudi Arabia's competitiveness in line with Saudi Vision 2030. By nurturing knowledge, skills, and innovation, our education system plays a central role in preparing a generation ready to confidently contribute on the local and global stage.

For these reasons, education has received the highest level of attention and support from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Chairman of the Council of Ministers. This reflects the leadership's belief in the value of investing in people and education as the primary engines of national development.

In line with this, the Ministry of Education has prioritized improving the quality of educational outcomes by strengthening the learning environment, curricula, and teaching quality, while also encouraging investment and fostering greater partnership and integration across the sector. These efforts include regulatory and legislative reforms that make the Kingdom more attractive to local and global investment in general and higher education, while also supporting entrepreneurs seeking to enter the education market and expand access to lifelong learning.

In such a promising sector, investment opportunities are estimated to exceed SAR 50 billion by 2030, reflecting education's vast potential to investors in different segments, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, which currently make up approximately 98% of all educational institutions. This positions SMEs as the driving force behind the sector and its future.

The ministry has also taken clear steps to strengthen the role of the non-governmental sector, targeting increase its contribution to education from 18% to over 29% by 2030. This will open the door to investment at every level, whether general education, vocational and technical training, higher education, or supporting services. Women are also key drivers of development, owning 39.4% of educational institutions in the Kingdom, a significant indicator that reflects their leadership and investment role in this sector, and reinforces their presence in a promising investment environment.

To further enable the non-governmental sector, the ministry has also introduced innovative solutions such as the Madares Platform, which supports the non-governmental sector and its beneficiaries. The platform helps parents choose suitable private schools, view tuition fees, facilities, and available services. This is a competitive environment that encourages excellence, innovation, and transparency, while safeguarding the rights of all parties through enforceable contracts. Additionally, the Madares Business portal was launched within the platform to simplify the investor journey, enabling them to monitor their investments and review available land and buildings for educational investment.

We are also working with government funds and financial institutions to provide flexible financing solutions for educational projects, particularly those led by small and medium-sized enterprises. These efforts help overcome financial challenges, provide flexible financing for educational projects, and encourage expansion and growth, thereby enhancing education quality and increasing opportunities for employment and innovation.

We deeply value your role in shaping the quality of education and are confident that your contributions will continue to build the foundations for a brighter future for our nation.

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# KEY COMMERCIAL INDICATORS

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Thanks to strong and persistent support for the Kingdom's rapidly developing private sector, Saudi Arabia saw a steady increase in total active commercial registrations reaching 1.7 million by the end of Q2 2025, and nearly half of which were female-owned.<sup>1</sup>



# COMMERCIAL REGISTRATIONS GROWTH SNAPSHOT

Bolstered by another strong quarter of non-oil investment and economic activity, Saudi Arabia’s dynamic private sector continued to show impressive performance indicators in Q2 2025.



**1.7 mn**

total active commercial registrations in the Kingdom by the end of Q2 2025



**+80,000**

commercial registrations issued in Q2 2025



**2%**

increase in total active commercial registrations in Q2 2025 compared to Q1 2025



**39,366**

total active e-commerce registrations by the end of Q2 2025



**38%**

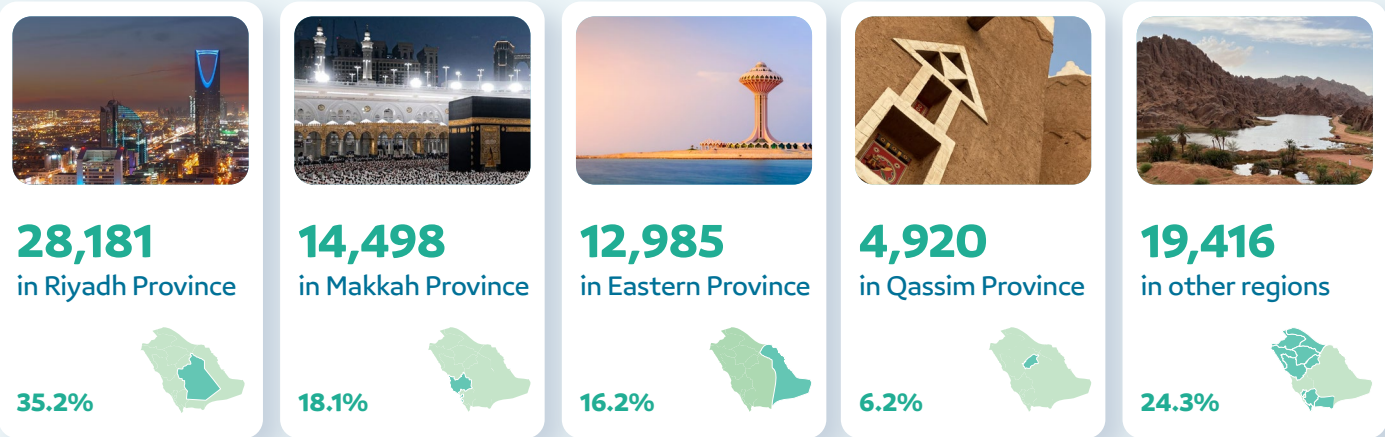
of all active commercial registrations by the end of Q2 2025 were youth-owned enterprises



**47%**

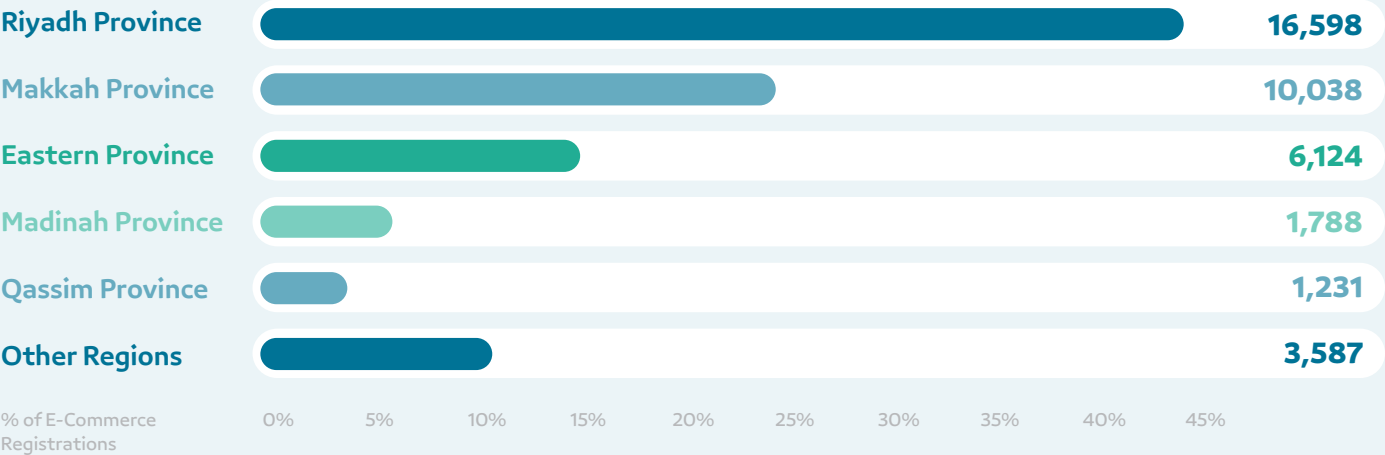
of all active registrations by the end of Q2 2025 were female-owned enterprises

## Issued commercial registrations by region, Q2 2025



## Issued e-commerce registrations by region, Q2 2025

Thanks to seamless digital payments, rapid fintech expansion, and an increasingly sophisticated logistics landscape, e-commerce is booming in Saudi Arabia.<sup>2</sup>



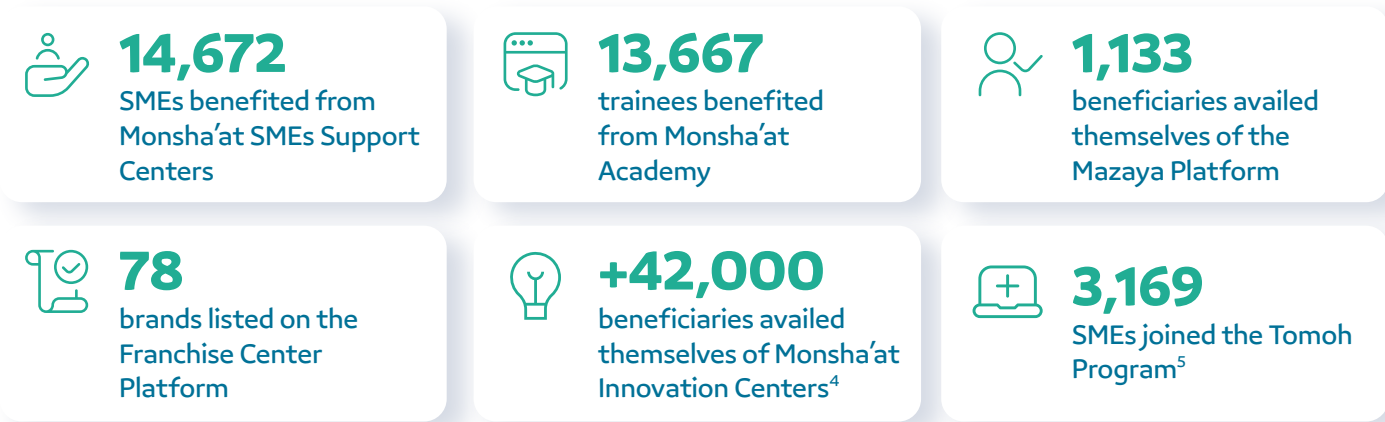
# MONSHA'AT & ECOSYSTEM UPDATES

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Q2 2025 saw another considerable wave of investment in Saudi startups, SMEs, and entrepreneurs. With robust support from Monsha'at initiatives such as Tomoh, an upskilling program whose graduates added billions to Nomu's market capitalization in Q2, the Kingdom also dominated MENA in VC funding, netting \$860 million in new investments in the first half of 2025.<sup>3</sup>

# MONSHA'AT KEY FIGURES

Saudi Arabia’s vibrant SME ecosystem was further strengthened in Q2 2025 thanks to thousands of entrepreneurs availing themselves of Monsha’at’s critical upskilling, training, funding-related, and franchise center services.



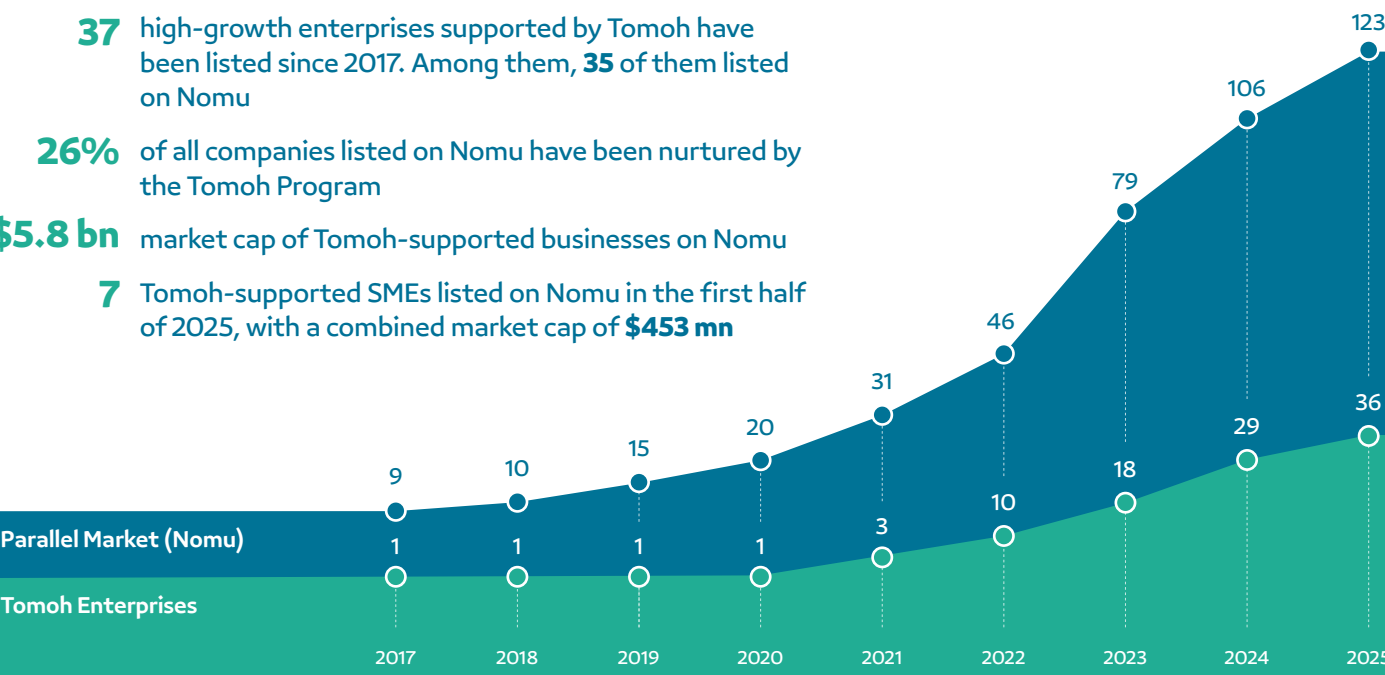
## TOMOH PROGRAM

Launched in 2017, the Tomoh Program is an essential part of Monsha’at’s toolkit to empower the next generation of Saudi fast-growing companies through robust financial enablement packages. The program works to:



Since launching, Tomoh has served 3,174<sup>7</sup> businesses and seen dozens of its beneficiaries go on to list on the parallel market “Nomu”.

Cumulative Listings on Nomu vs. Tomoh Enterprises



## KAFALAH PROGRAM

The Loan Guarantee Program (Kafalah) was launched in 2006 to support SMEs and enable them to access financing through government-backed financing guarantees; thereby encouraging lending institutions to provide loans and further enhancing the national economy.



**+\$32 bn**

in total products and initiatives through Q2 2025



**\$23 bn**

in total guarantees for SMEs made through Q2 2025



**25,801**

SMEs have benefitted from the program since its inception



**8**

separate funding programs for eligible SMEs

## Enterprise mobility through Kafalah program guarantee

SMEs benefiting from Kafalah program have displayed considerable growth and expansion, with many businesses increasing in company size and capacity after joining the program.



**7.8%**

of participating enterprises went from micro- to small-sized businesses



**3.9%**

of participating enterprises went from small- to medium-sized businesses

## SME growth and Saudization impact

Kafalah beneficiaries also demonstrated considerable progress in Saudization rates across all sizes, with micro-sized businesses witnessing the fastest pace of growth in hiring locally.



**25.8%**

growth in Saudization among micro-sized businesses (11,000 local hires)



**14.7%**

growth in Saudization among small-sized businesses (210,000 local hires)



**10.6%**

growth in Saudization among medium-sized businesses (187,000 local hires)<sup>8</sup>



## QUARTERLY VC FUNDING

Saudi Arabia's booming VC ecosystem continued to outperform in the first half of 2025, with local startups raising a record \$860 million across 114 deals, securing well over half of all venture capital deployed in the region over the same period, according to MAGNiTT.



**\$860 mn**

raised by Saudi-based startups in H1 2025



**116%**

y-o-y increase in capital raised



**114 deals**

in H1 2025



**31%**

y-o-y increase in transactions



**7**

mergers and acquisitions transactions in H1 2025



**89%**

of deals were early-stage in H1 2025



**56%**

of all VC funding in MENA during H1 2025 was invested in Saudi Arabia



**+\$1 bn**

in VC expected to be raised by Saudi-based startups through Q4 2025



**\$250 mn**

raised by quick-commerce platform Ninja, creating a new unicorn<sup>9</sup>

### Q VC INSIGHT:

## Philip Bahoshy

Founder & CEO, MAGNiTT

**MAGNiTT**

MAGNiTT is the leading venture capital data platform in MEAPT, enabling investors, corporations, tech companies, and government entities to make informed and data-driven decisions based on verified information.



"Saudi Arabia's VC ecosystem delivered its strongest first-half performance on record in H1 2025, defying global economic headwinds and reinforcing its preeminence in MENA. Total VC funding in the Kingdom increased 116% year-over-year to \$860 million, while the deal count rose 31% to 114 transactions. This growth was driven by both early-stage dynamism and the return of mega-deals, notably Ninja's \$250 million raise and Tabby's \$160 million round, which together accounted for nearly half of total funding.

Despite global market jitters, Saudi Arabia stood out as MENA's top VC destination for the third consecutive half-year, capturing 56% of regional funding.

Sectors like sustainability, enterprise software, and EdTech also attracted significant capital. Meanwhile, the number of unique investors increased by 54% to 117, with international players accounting for a record 36% share. Saudi Arabia is building a full-spectrum VC pipeline, the maturity of which was further underlined by a 250% growth in mergers and acquisitions activity."

# FUNDING AWARENESS SERIES: INTRODUCING BOOTSTRAPPING

Bootstrapping is when you build and grow a business using personal savings, early revenues, and careful cost management instead of external funding like bank loans or venture capital. It's an entrepreneurial mindset that rewards self-reliance, innovation, and financial discipline.



## Self-reliance

Founders retain full control and ownership of their business without needing partners or meeting investor expectations.



## Lean operations

Limited resources force entrepreneurs to prioritize spending, focus on essentials, and find effective solutions that drive value.



## Customer-driven growth

Since revenue is the main source of funding, bootstrapped businesses often develop closer relationships with customers and iterate quickly.



## Long-term sustainability

By avoiding heavy debt or early equity loss, bootstrapped companies often become more financially disciplined and resilient.



## Flexibility

Not relying on external funding, startups can pivot when needed, an agility that allows them to adapt to market changes or pursue new opportunities as they arise.



## Satisfaction

As anyone who has pulled their own business up by the bootstraps knows, creating a viable enterprise from scratch is a profoundly satisfying experience.<sup>10</sup>

## Challenges

Bootstrapping empowers founders with full ownership and control, but it also demands resilience. Growth may be steadier and more deliberate, requiring founders to embrace intense workloads and actively build professional networks. All the same, many of the world's best businesses have overcome these to thrive.<sup>11</sup>



Launched in 2002  
with \$65,000<sup>12</sup>



Founded in 1995  
with \$0<sup>13</sup>



Founded in 2008 with less  
than \$1,000<sup>14</sup>

# PROVINCE FOCUS: RIYADH

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Since the launch of Saudi Vision 2030 in 2016, Riyadh's private sector ecosystem has gone from one systemic success to another. Thanks to continued investment in Riyadh's dynamic entrepreneurial environment, the heart of Saudi Arabia's non-oil economic expansion now boasts over 500,000 active commercial registrations, more than 28,000 of which were issued in Q2 2025.<sup>15</sup>

# THE GROWTH OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN RIYADH

In addition to being Saudi Arabia's venture capital hub with over 70 funds and accelerators, Riyadh is a financial behemoth powering Saudi private sector growth, generating almost 50% of non-oil GDP, and home to more than 600 new regional headquarters.<sup>16</sup>

## Private sector contribution to GDP

As a leading center for entrepreneurship, it should come as no surprise that Riyadh's economy has blossomed in the past decade, thanks in large part to robust growth in its private sector economy.



### Almost 50%

of the Kingdom's non-oil GDP is generated in Riyadh<sup>17</sup>



### More than 600

companies have established HQ in Riyadh thanks to Regional Headquarters (RHQ) program<sup>18</sup>



### Top 10

largest city economy targeted by 2030<sup>19</sup>



### 52%

of Saudi economy is driven by non-oil activity, thanks to Riyadh-powered private sector<sup>20</sup>

## Riyadh leads in venture capital investment

Since the first VC fund in the Kingdom was established in Riyadh in 2015, the Saudi capital has led the country in venture capital investment, spurring investment in dozens of innovative Saudi startups that have transformed the economy.



### +70

VC funds, accelerators, and angel groups located in Riyadh<sup>21</sup>



### 38

startups invested in by Riyadh-based Sanabil 500 MENA Seed Accelerator Fund<sup>22</sup>



### 27

startups invested in by Riyadh-based Impact46<sup>23</sup>



### 1st

Saudi VC fund, Raed Ventures, founded in Riyadh in 2015<sup>24</sup>



### 38

investments made by Riyadh-based Hala Ventures<sup>25</sup>



### \$800 mn

VC tech fund STV based in Riyadh<sup>26</sup>



### 36

startups funded by Riyadh-based tech fund Nama Ventures<sup>27</sup>



# RIYADH’S BUSINESS-HUB STATUS TO BENEFIT SMEs

As the geographic heart of many of the Kingdom’s most transformative urban initiatives, Riyadh-based SMEs are benefiting from tremendous opportunities in a wide variety of sectors.

## Monsha’at’s Biban Forum unlocks opportunities for SMEs on a global scale

Biban is the Kingdom’s flagship event for SMEs and entrepreneurs, offering a platform to upskill, network, access funding, and accelerate business growth within Saudi Arabia’s booming public and private sector. The upcoming edition will take place from November 5 to 8 at Riyadh Front Exhibition and Conference Center.



## A great LEAP forward for Riyadh-based SMEs

Soon to enter its fifth year, Riyadh’s annual LEAP conference acts as a huge catalyst for SME growth in the capital by combining an unprecedented investor presence, global exposure, and pitch funding opportunities to thousands of local and international startups and SMEs.





## Diriyah Gate revives ancient Riyadh hub

Under the Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA), Diriyah is being transformed into a flourishing arts and entertainment hub with huge opportunities for SMEs in hospitality, F&B, retail, cultural tourism, green construction, artisanry, and more.



## Riyadh Expo 2030 puts on a global show

Under the theme “Foresight for Tomorrow”, Riyadh Expo will be focused on Transformational Technology, Sustainable Solutions, and Prosperous People. During and after the 6-month event, SMEs in retail, catering, tourism, IT, arts and entertainment, and sustainable tech stand to flourish.



# RIYADH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY BOLSTERS SME GROWTH

Committed to increasing the strength and resilience of the capital’s private sector, the Chamber has developed a wide range of services to support SMEs in Riyadh.



### Consultations

Provides specialized consultations that assess project feasibility and help business owners implement best practices in the most effective way possible.



### Incubators & accelerators

Supports early-stage entrepreneurs through counseling, project development, prototyping services, and strategic networking opportunities.



### Guidance

Provides advisory and direction to startups to help them grow and develop their service offerings in accordance with the latest management breakthroughs.



### Training

Provides programs that advance professional capabilities.



### Marketing

Helps SMEs market their products and services by participating in events and exhibitions, networking with investors, and identifying the competitive landscape.



### Funding

Collaborates with a range of partners to provide a critical source of funding to SMEs and entrepreneurs.



### Investment opportunities

Helps SMEs locate financing opportunities across Riyadh, particularly in sectors prioritized by Saudi Vision 2030.

## Key Chamber partnerships and community initiatives

- 
**MoU with Monsha’at to promote e-commerce:** Signed in cooperation with the E-Commerce Council, this MoU paves the way to offer training programs and advisory sessions to help SMEs and entrepreneurs navigate the challenges of the digital landscape.<sup>37</sup>
- 
**Helping SMEs provide urban services on Balady:** In collaboration with the Ministry of Municipalities and Housing, the Chamber organized a workshop to help SMEs become qualified service providers on the Balady platform, a huge opportunity to provide municipal services.<sup>38</sup>
- 
**Innovative upskilling:** The Chamber launched the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Diplomas project in partnership with the Entrepreneurship Institute at King Saud University to offer diplomas in entrepreneurship, innovation management, and technical innovation.<sup>39</sup>
- 
**Youth and female incubation programs:** In collaboration with Prince Sultan University and the Community Development Association, these provide young and female entrepreneurs with tailored support in strategic consulting, funding readiness, scalability, and more.<sup>40</sup>



## MONSHA'AT STARTUP HUB

Startup Hub has emerged as a leading center for entrepreneurship and innovation in Riyadh. Located in the heart of Diriyah, it offers expansive workspaces ranging from private offices to collaborative coworking areas, designed to support startups at every stage.

### Objectives



### Services offered

- › Shared workspaces and meeting rooms
- › Technical support
- › Innovation lab
- › 24/7 access and security system
- › Printing services
- › Dedicated training facilities



### Growing community of startups

The center currently hosts over 48 startups and, since its inception, has supported more than 45 businesses, reflecting the growing demand for supportive spaces where entrepreneurs can scale their businesses and connect with peers.<sup>41</sup>

### Key achievements



**2**  
accelerator  
programs  
launched



**9**  
expert  
speakers  
engaged



**34**  
events held



**+1,200**  
beneficiaries<sup>42</sup>

# EDUCATIONAL SMEs IN SAUDI ARABIA

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Driven by Saudi Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia's education sector is undergoing a sweeping transformation that is preparing the Kingdom's youth for a competitive, knowledge-based economy. Thanks to a series of initiatives that increase enrollment in private and vocational institutions, develop competitive skills, modernize curricula, and boost youth employability, the sector is rapidly becoming a leading catalyst for both business growth and long-term national development.



# OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION SECTOR AND ITS TRANSFORMATION UNDER SAUDI VISION 2030

Literacy rates and other key educational metrics have been on the rise for decades in Saudi Arabia. Thanks to Saudi Vision 2030’s ambitious policies to boost enrollment, expand access to specialized fields, and increase the Kingdom’s Human Development Index (HDI), they are advancing at even faster rates.



## General education landscape

**64%**  
of 15–24-year-olds enrolled in education and training in 2024

**12.4**  
years of schooling attained per Saudi national over 25

**99.9%**  
literacy for 15-24-year-olds<sup>43</sup>

**0.94**  
Human Development Index target by 2030<sup>44</sup>

**89**  
initiatives to improve educational outcomes through the Human Capability Development Program<sup>45</sup>



## Higher education performance

**3**  
universities rank in the global top 200, with a goal of **5** by 2030

**32**  
Saudi universities featured in the Sustainable Development Rankings

**30**  
leading global institutions participating in the program

**+23,400**  
Saudi students enroll at top global universities through Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Scholarship Program

**29**  
Saudi universities listed in Times Higher Education World Universities Rankings in 2025<sup>46</sup>



## Vocational education and workforce readiness

**260**  
training facilities run by the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC)

**240,000**  
active trainees in TVTC facilities across the Kingdom<sup>47</sup>

**47.8%**  
of technical and vocational graduates employed within 6 months of graduation in 2024, with a target of **65%** by 2030<sup>48</sup>

**43%**  
of university grads employed within 6 months in 2024, with a target of **75%** by 2030<sup>49</sup>



# TRENDS IN THE SAUDI EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

Saudi Arabia is rapidly transforming its education system to prepare its youth for a knowledge-driven economy by increasing STEM and digital learning platforms; adopting earlier foreign language acquisition; launching AI and coding initiatives; and increasing vocational training programs, research funding, public-private partnerships, and international collaborations.



## Innovating the curriculum and teaching methods

### Shift

from memorization to critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity

**+54,000**

students benefit from Mawhiba endowment's efforts to boost STEM education<sup>50</sup>

**+19,000**

schools to benefit from increased digital literacy and inclusion efforts<sup>51</sup>

### 1st-grade

onward English language instruction since 2021<sup>52</sup>, and a pilot-phase roll-out of Mandarin language introduced into primary and middle schools<sup>53</sup>



## Private sector growth and participation

### Encouraging

private investment in education

### Expansion

of international schools and curricula options

### Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

in schools and higher education on the rise<sup>54</sup>



## Digital transformation

**+6 mn**

students benefit from Madrasati, a digital learning platform launched in 2021<sup>55</sup>

### National Strategy

for Data and Artificial Intelligence helping spur the development of AI, robotics, and coding programs at all levels

**+20,000**

AI and data specialists to be trained through the program<sup>56</sup>



## Vocational and technical training

**+4,000**

trainers licensed by Technical and Vocational Training Corporation in 2024<sup>57</sup>

**+100**

Saudi youth trained through Siemens partnership in energy, transport, and business administration<sup>58</sup>



## Higher education reform and international collaborations

### Universities

like King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) and King Saud University are becoming global research hubs

**+23,400**

scholarships through Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Scholarship Program

### Executive

education programs are booming in Saudi Arabia, with Babson College, London Business School, and IE opening offices or collaborations in Riyadh<sup>59</sup>

# Safa Alrashed

**Deputy Minister for Future Jobs and Capabilities,**  
Ministry of Communications and Information  
Technology



## **Can you share more about the undertakings of the Future Jobs and Capabilities department? How does this align with the Kingdom's broader long-term vision to achieve Saudi Vision 2030?**

As a strategic pillar of the ministry, the agency plays a pivotal role in preparing our nation's human capital and enhancing the competitiveness of Saudi talent in the digital economy. Each of these efforts aligns with the Kingdom's long-term objectives and the principles of Saudi Vision 2030. To do so, it is building the nation's digital capabilities by designing and implementing training programs and bootcamps for AI, cloud computing, cybersecurity, IoT, and more in collaboration with leading global tech companies and academic institutions.

The agency also enables job growth by partnering with Monsha'at, local universities, the Ministry of Human Resources, and the Human Resources Development Fund to provide employment support initiatives that promote localization in communications and IT professions; support SMEs; and connect job seekers with opportunities in the communication and IT sector. To ensure long-term digital talent, it also works to align education with labor market requirements through the creation of smart digital curricula, teacher upskilling, year-round student training camps, and setting up technical schools throughout the Kingdom. The agency places a big emphasis on strategic partnerships with non-profits that help diversify the economy and close the digital skills gap through wide-reaching initiatives.

## **What do you see as the most in-demand skills of tomorrow, and how can SMEs, particularly in the education and EdTech sectors, play a role in equipping the workforce with those capabilities?**

The workforce is set to undergo many changes, which is one of the reasons why lifelong learning is so important. Unquestionably, cloud computing, data, machine learning, and generative AI are among the most in-demand areas. Hard skills that prioritize these in addition to cybersecurity, data analytics, and programming will be highly valued, as will soft ones like analytical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, innovation, emotional intelligence, communication, adaptability, and initiative.

The good news is that education and EdTech are perfectly poised to help meet this demand, especially SMEs who invest in adaptive training platforms that deliver personalized learning experiences

or partner with schools and universities to create large-scale, interactive Arabic educational content tailored to local market needs. They can also leverage immersive technologies like augmented and virtual reality to provide engaging educational and training experiences that serve marketing, training, and educational purposes.

## **How is MCIT working to bridge the digital skills gap?**

Bridging the digital skills gap is a cornerstone for achieving Saudi Vision 2030's goals and building a thriving digital economy. To address it, the ministry is strengthening partnerships with global companies, SMEs, and educational and training institutions through initiatives that help integrate AI into school curricula. For example, the National Center for Curricula announced the inclusion of AI curricula for all ages starting in the 2025–2026 academic year. Student capacity building is also essential, which is why MCIT has collaborated with private sector companies, non-profit tech associations, and universities to help launch 19 specialized AI training programs and bootcamps with global titans like Google, Huawei, and Microsoft that have benefitted over 6,000 students and more than 13,000 teachers.

To ensure the next generation of individuals and SMEs are equipped to compete at a global level, MCIT offers a wide variety of on-the-job training, leadership programs, and professional certification support that has trained, upskilled, and empowered millions of Saudis. It also provides financial support for SMEs through programs like the National Program for Information Technology Development.

## **What opportunities for SMEs do you foresee emerging at the intersection of education and technology in the Kingdom?**

I see a lot of opportunity for SMEs to harness AI to create personalized, data-driven learning programs that can tap into the shared economy by enabling experts to deliver collaborative educational solutions. To support this kind of innovation, the ministry launched the Center of Digital Entrepreneurship (CODE), a hub that fosters startups through mentorship, digital incentives, technical support, incubation programs, prototyping labs, and financial backing. It also connects entrepreneurs, mentors, and investors in ways that promote digital entrepreneurship, accelerate technology adoption, and create new opportunities in the Kingdom's rapidly growing digital economy.

## SAUDI EDUCATION: GROWTH POTENTIAL

Saudi Arabia has a dynamic educational landscape that's seen the launch of dozens of new private universities and K-12 schools in recent years. Thanks to growing demand and continued investment, the sector is on pace to continue its rapid expansion through 2030.

### National priorities



**\$52 bn**

to education budget in 2024<sup>60</sup>



**16%**

of national budget spent on education in 2024<sup>61</sup>



**214,000**

additional seats in private schools needed by 2035<sup>62</sup>

### Student enrollment



**7.2 mn**

students in primary or secondary education by 2030<sup>63</sup>



**1.3 mn**

students enrolled in Saudi universities<sup>64</sup>



**132,000**

targeted international students, researchers, and professors<sup>65</sup>

### Global integration



**24.4%**

growth in schools offering international curricula between 2018-2022<sup>66</sup>



**+5**

international universities with high rankings have obtained foreign investor license to establish branches in Saudi Arabia<sup>67</sup>

### Learning goals



**387/500**

PISA score in 2022 (OECD average is 472)



**500**

target PISA score by 2030<sup>68</sup>

## Opportunities for educational SMEs

As the Kingdom marshals its resources toward achieving its ambitious human development and Saudi Vision 2030 targets, there are a wide range of exciting opportunities for SMEs across Saudi Arabia's thriving education landscape.

### Digital platforms

SMEs in online learning, apps, and AI-driven tools can tap into established user bases, strong tech infrastructure, and profound government backing for e-learning.

**16%**  
**annual growth**  
in e-learning platforms  
expected between 2021  
to 2027<sup>69</sup>

**\$24 bn**  
EdTech market in GCC by  
2028<sup>70</sup>



### Private K-12 schools

In addition to international curriculums that prioritize STEM subjects and foreign languages, there's a growing demand for high quality private education in the Kingdom.

**400,000**  
private school  
places will be  
needed by 2030

**200**  
new private  
schools needed  
to fill growing  
demand gap by  
2030<sup>71</sup>

**7**  
international  
schools per million  
residents in Saudi  
Arabia<sup>72</sup>



### Vocational & STEM training

Entrepreneurial educators that align themselves with future AI and digital-related labor market needs.

**\$100 bn**  
AI and data analytics  
initiative known as Project  
Transcendence to drive huge  
demand in STEM-related  
subjects<sup>73</sup>

**920,000**  
jobs to be created to achieve  
Saudi Vision 2030 targets,  
many powered by vocational  
and STEM-related education<sup>74</sup>



### Higher education

With the Kingdom aiming to create nearly a million new highly skilled jobs by 2030, the opportunities to enter higher and executive education are huge.

**13,000**  
students targeted by  
University of New Haven  
after 2026 Riyadh opening<sup>75</sup>

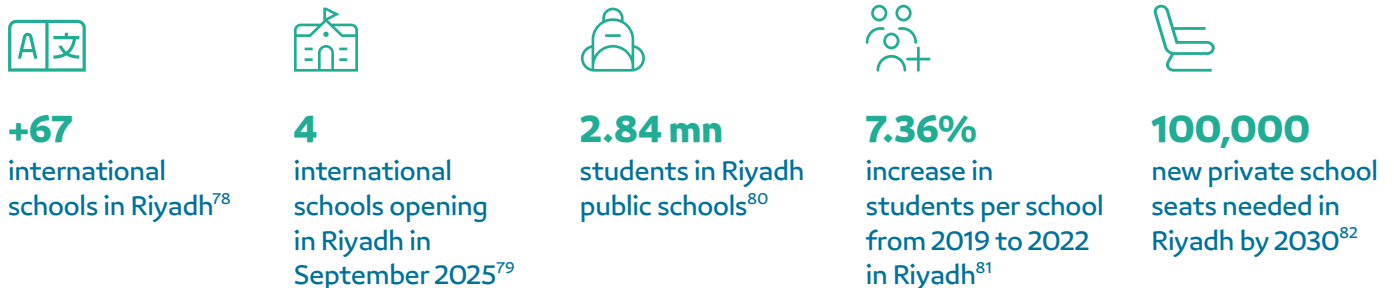
**300,000**  
university graduates in 2023,  
a **50%** increase since 2015<sup>77</sup>

**More than 600**  
multinationals have relocated  
to the Kingdom since the  
Regional Headquarters  
Initiative went into effect,  
driving demand for higher  
education for Saudization<sup>76</sup>



# SME GROWTH SUPPORTED BY INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL EXPANSION

Thanks to a fast-growing population and increasing demand for international education, Riyadh's private education sector in particular is booming, particularly among expats. As the city continues its transformation into a global hub, international schools are rising in popularity to service the increasing the number of places needed.



## Royal Commission for Riyadh City's International Schools Attraction Program

Launched in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Investment, this initiative supports Riyadh's ambition to become a leading global city by incentivizing international schools to help meet its increasingly sophisticated education needs.



### Incentives introduced for international schools

- › Co-education up to grade 6
- › Curriculum flexibility with Ministry-aligned national identity components
- › Autonomy over academic calendars
- › Saudization exemptions for leadership and administrative roles
- › Visa facilitation via the Ministry of Human Resources
- › 3-year exemption from Saudization quotas for teaching staff<sup>84</sup>

### Schools attracted

- › King's College (UK)
- › SEK International School (Spain)
- › Aldenham School (UK)
- › One World International School (SG)
- › Downe House (UK)
- › Reigate Grammar (UK)
- › Beech Hall School (UK)<sup>85</sup>
- › Ellesmere College (UK)<sup>86</sup>
- › British International School (UK)<sup>87</sup>
- › Buckswood School (UK)<sup>88</sup>

### International schools in the pipeline

#### Aldenham Riyadh:

Opening in autumn 2026 in King Abdullah Financial District.<sup>89</sup>

#### Aldenham Secondary School:

Opening new campus in 2027 for 11-18 year olds.<sup>90</sup>

#### Eton House:

Launching in September 2026 with pre-school and K-12 in Grenada.<sup>91</sup>



## Education emerging sub-sectors

SMEs across several key sectors can expect to benefit from downstream opportunities brought on by the education boom.



### Tutoring

Saudi Arabia’s tutoring market has experienced significant growth, supported by favorable education reforms and technological advancements facilitating online tutoring.

**\$182**  
for the 8-hour private  
online tutoring package

**+5,000**  
students on AlGooru  
tutoring platform<sup>92</sup>



### Sports

Aligned with its commitment to healthier lifestyles and education, Vision 2030 integrates sports into schools and universities, enhancing community well-being through initiatives that require active private sector participation.

**3%**  
target contribution to  
non-oil GDP by 2030

**100,000**  
job opportunities created  
within sports sector by  
2030

**30%**  
private sector  
contribution to sports  
sector by 2030<sup>93</sup>

**\$690 mn**  
allocated to the creation  
of Saudi sporting  
federations<sup>94</sup>

## ☆ SUCCESS STORY:

# Khalid Abou Kassem

Founder & CEO, AlGooru



Launched in 2021, AlGooru is the first licensed and qualified private tutoring platform in Saudi Arabia. To date, more than 1,350 tutors have helped over 5,000 students.

**You are the founder and CEO of Saudi Arabia's first licensed academic and recreational edtech platform. What was the inspiration behind its launch?**

The initial spark was being a private tutor myself prior to launching the company. I was tutoring multiple subjects from 2016 onward and started this as a side hustle. Beyond that, I was also surrounded by a lot of believers, starting with the government and its services, the ecosystem as a whole, investors, micro-founders, our employees, and so on. They were all believers in where the company was going and are why I've been very lucky to have no significant competition in the Saudi market. Being in a huge market with no massive incumbent was also key.

**What were the biggest hurdles you faced when launching and scaling AlGooru in the Kingdom, from hiring to regulation to finding your first users?**

When it comes to hiring, it's important to know that access to talent is difficult and costly. I'm a first-time founder, and understanding how hiring works and the challenges of the ecosystem is very difficult. But looking deeper always allows you to find the right people. On regulation, I'm extremely proud to have partnered with the National e-Learning Center, the Ministry of Education, Saudi Business Center, and MISA, all of which were very helpful in unlocking so many things for us across the last few years, including the license, which we were the first to achieve.

On finding users, we're thankful for ads. With eight million students, the Saudi market is huge. How do you even reach a thousand of them? We invested heavily in ads at an early stage, though it wasn't always easy. We spent a lot and got a lot of users, which helped us understand what the market wanted. Having a unique edge really accelerates your potential, especially if you're building something from scratch that no one else has.

**AlGooru has introduced new ways for students to access private tutoring and meet students' and parents' wider needs. What services are you most proud of?**

We started as a platform that links students with private tutors but transformed into one that provides multiple tracks that personalize learning based on each student's needs. We also have tracks for parents that enable them to track their kids' progress on a daily basis, which mothers in particular love. Many of them are busy until 5pm every day, so they assign a tutor to revise their kid's assignments, exams, and agenda three or four times a week.



We also have language tutoring tracks where you can learn one of the many foreign languages we offer, from beginner to advanced, in addition to tutors for Islamic studies, the General Aptitude Test (GAT), university subjects, and more.

In terms of innovation, our platform has a built-in matching algorithm, top-quality handpicked tutors, AI-powered plan generators and digital classrooms, 24/7 customer support, and a bunch of cool stuff that parents and students love. We understand there are different socioeconomic classes in Saudi Arabia, which is why we're also the only platform with a lot of unique selling propositions, such as online and offline offerings.

**AlGooru has carved out a niche in connecting students with qualified private tutors. How do you ensure quality and consistency across the platform?**

The quality of our tutors is a main reason why 85% of our clients return to us and stay within the platform. We accept less than 3% of tutors who apply and have very rigorous oversight to ensure excellence, confirm sessions are delivered on time, standardize lessons, leverage AI, track engagement, and improve lesson-planning. The AlGooru system also ranks and grades each tutor and allocates demand based on their metrics. Thanks to this system, the hotter your profile becomes as a qualified educator, the greater your demand.

**For those looking to enter the education space, where do you see the biggest gaps or needs in the Saudi market?**

There are four areas lacking attention, the first of which is STEM. Schools are integrating more coding and STEM courses, but there's no one targeting that yet. The next is AI-based learning, which is rapidly growing. A third is corporate upskilling, which no one is doing offline yet. A fourth is vehicle to grid enablement.

**What advice would you give young EdTech entrepreneurs starting out today?**

If we look at Saudi Vision 2030, three out of the six pillars include education-related KPIs. So that's where the country is heading over the next five years. My advice is to not miss out on the revolution happening across the Saudi education sector. That being said, I would also remind them that tech requires unimaginable levels of resilience. If you're in it for the short term and want to exit in three years, it's not for you. But if you're willing to commit to a long-term vision, you can achieve amazing things.

# ACCELERATORS & INCUBATORS ENABLING THE NEXT GENERATION OF EDUCATION STARTUPS

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As Saudi Arabia positions itself as a global innovation hub, a growing number of accelerators and incubators are emerging to support the nation's vibrant startup ecosystem, a key potential beneficiary of which are EdTech and education-focused startups. Backed by government bodies, universities, and private sector partners, these initiatives aim to cultivate entrepreneurial talent, fast-track early-stage companies, and unlock access to funding, mentorship, and market exposure.

# ACCELERATORS DRIVING INNOVATIVE OUTCOMES

In a bid to boost local startups, a wide range of accelerators have been launched to support the growth and development of SMEs with the power to transform the education and EdTech sector.

## Misk Accelerator

Founded in 2019 in cooperation with the Riyadh-based MISK Foundation, this was established to support early-stage Saudi-based tech startups in their growth journey.



## Program elements

- › **1-to-1 coaching sessions:** These are designed to customize the Misk Accelerator experience by having hands-on detailed sessions.
- › **Focus weeks:** These in-person events are meticulously crafted to equip startups with the tools and guidance needed to excel in all aspects of their entrepreneurial journey.
- › **Masterclasses & workshops:** Sessions led by industry leaders and entrepreneurial experts who share knowledge and insights through tailored content followed by Q&As.
- › **Misk Accelerator Investor Night:** This event features entrepreneurs presenting their ideas to a distinguished group of venture capitalists and angel investors.
- › **Demo Day:** The grand finale, the flagship Misk Accelerator Demo Day is one of the premier events in the KSA innovation calendar, with plenty of senior stakeholders in attendance eager to learn more about game-changing solutions.
- › **Global engagement:** Startups travel to a global innovation hub, engaging with vibrant local ecosystems to learn how to expand their operations and connect with investors.
- › **Secure direct equity investments:** Select startups receive direct equity investments from a global venture investment partner, providing the capital needed to scale rapidly.

## Program highlights



Zero equity with startups retaining full ownership



Access to local & global network of founders, investors & entrepreneurs



Business development & funding



Access to shared office space



Tailored support services & IT perks

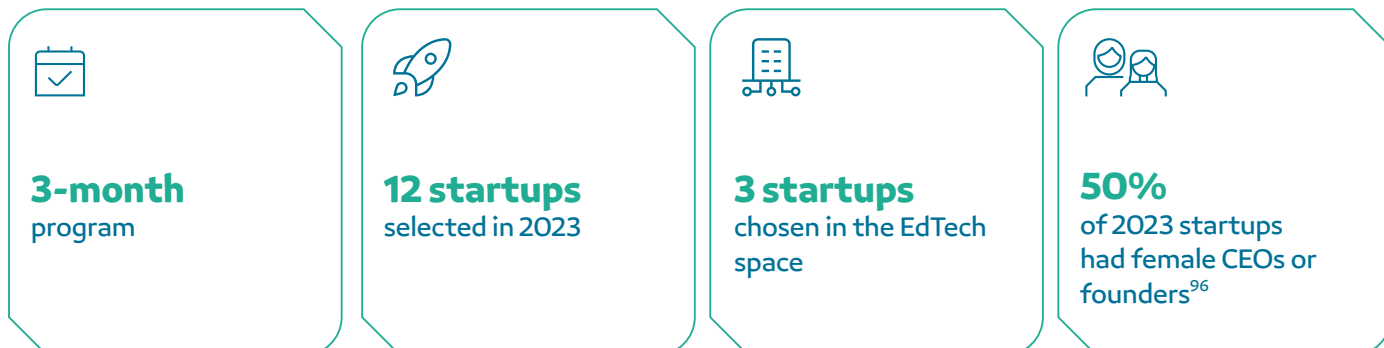


Post-program support<sup>95</sup>

## Riyadh Techstars Accelerator

Launched in 2021 in partnership with Raed Ventures Investment Fund (RVIF), the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT), and Saudi National Bank (SNB), this program backs early-stage tech startups across MENA, including those focused on AI and EdTech.

**techstars**



## Blossom SME Empowerment Program

Announced in 2025, the TikTok x Blossom Accelerator SME Empowerment Program is a 3-month accelerator program in Riyadh to support young Saudi entrepreneurs, particularly women, by providing funding, mentorship, and visibility to accelerate the growth of early-stage companies.<sup>97</sup>

 **Blossom**  
accelerator



## gener8tor x NTDP

National Technology Development Program (NTDP) and gener8tor have partnered to launch the gener8tor Investment Accelerator, a program that supports startups' growth through mentorship, business development resources, investor connections, and investment capital.

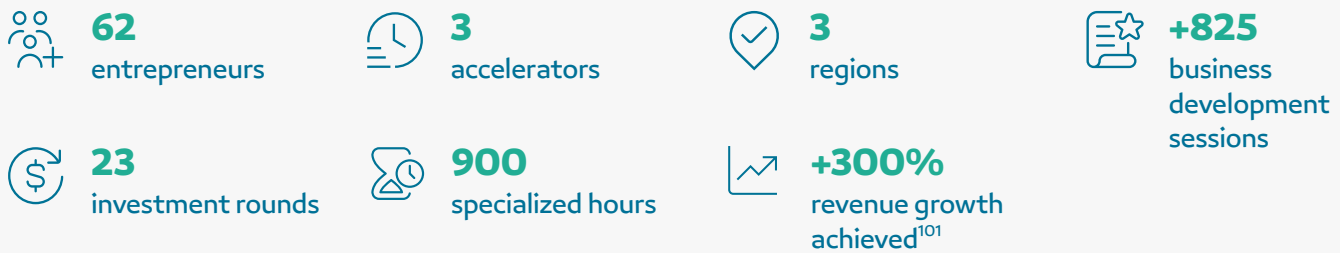
 **gener8tor**





## Monsha'at University Project Acceleration

Launched in 2020 in collaboration with Creda, the program includes three intensive acceleration programs aimed at fostering the growth of startup projects led by university entrepreneurs in the Kingdom. They were implemented in Riyadh, Jeddah, and Eastern Province.



## Taibah Valley Innovation Hub

Launched by Taibah University in 2018, this research and innovation hub was designed to spur growth in the knowledge economy by investing in Saudi-owned tech-focused startups.



To support the creation of a robust entrepreneurial community, the hub offers a wide range of training programs, competitions, and other support services to drive SME growth.

- › Training
- › Consulting
- › Expert encounters
- › Co-working spaces
- › Entrepreneurial competitions
- › Events
- › Business incubator and accelerator
- › Investment and financing channels<sup>102</sup>

## Center of Digital Entrepreneurship Incubator

Launched by MCIT's Center of Digital Entrepreneurship, this supports the growth of AI startups by giving them access to training, financial support from the National Technology Development Program (NTDP), mentorship, digital incentives, networking opportunities, and office space.



## Industry partners & collaborators

- › Saudi Data and AI Authority (SDAIA)
- › National Technology Development Program (NTDP)
- › Saudi Company for Artificial Intelligence
- › SambaNova
- › BIM Ventures<sup>103</sup>

## The Garage

The Garage is a new innovation hub located within Riyadh's King Abdulaziz University for Sciences and Technology that was co-launched by MCIT and the Saudi Federation for Cyber Security and Programming to give tech entrepreneurs a space to develop ideas into innovative businesses.



**28,000**  
sqm facility



**+230**  
startups  
supported



**+650**  
jobs created



**+\$58 mn**  
startup value  
created



**+60**  
events held since  
launch<sup>104</sup>



**25 startups**  
in deep tech to be  
incubated per year



**24 startups**  
incubated at  
Garage Incubator<sup>105</sup>



### Garage Plus

Created in partnership with Google for Startups, KAUST, the National Technology Development Program, and the Ministry of Investment, this flagship accelerator was designed to support local and international tech startups looking to expand into Saudi Arabia.

- › Mentorship
- › Access to investors
- › Soft landing & tech support
- › Co-working spaces
- › Access to KACST labs
- › 1,000 emerging tech companies to be nurtured through MVP Lab
- › GAIA initiative to fuel generative AI startups
- › Antler investment program to back the most driven founders
- › Boost initiative to partner tech entrepreneurs with mentors<sup>106</sup>



### Garage Academy

Launched in 2022, this initiative offers specialized professional programs to develop human capital among SME managers in emerging technologies, product management, and technical capacity building by partnering with leading global authorities.

- › Tuwaiq Academy
- › NVIDIA
- › Google Cloud
- › Meta
- › INSEAD
- › Silicon Valley Innovation Center
- › Stanford University
- › Harvard Business School
- › Oxford University
- › IE University<sup>107</sup>

# Dr. Mounira Jamjoom

Co-Founder and Board Chair, Aanaab



Founded in 2019 at a Harvard pitch competition, Aanaab is an online teacher upskilling platform that trains thousands of teachers across the Arab-speaking world.



**Aanaab has grown remarkably since its founding in 2019. What was the initial gap in the sector you set out to address, and how has your vision evolved as the company scaled?**

I was working in education consulting, which is an industry where you see gaps. You work with the public sector, private sector, students, teachers, everyone. One of the things happening was a shift towards quality, not quantity, in Saudi Arabia and the region. I was doing a program at Harvard Business School, and there was a small pitch competition. I pitched an online learning platform that focused on teacher upskilling in MENA. The research shows that good teachers make a good system. And like that, I won with the idea. I called a couple friends and said let's try to build it. We launched it in 2019 and immediately started testing.

But the question remained: how do you create an edtech that works effectively with the government? It started as a course platform for teachers, but now the value proposition is much bigger. We serve schools to raise their quality. In working B2B, we also serve the government. Altogether, we have trained more than 17,000 music teachers in Saudi Arabia. We're not only raising the quality of workers in the sector, but also creating new jobs. That's the exciting bit.

**Aanaab operates in hundreds of schools across more than 10 countries. What makes a professional development platform for teachers truly scalable, and what lessons can other EdTech entrepreneurs learn from your journey?**

The first is a diversity of resources: diversify your content. It's critical to have different things because teachers have very different experiences in the classroom. That's why we cover special education, technology, student well-being, teacher well-being, and more. The second key to success is being teacher-led. That's why we listen to schools and teachers every year. We survey the markets. What do you want to learn? What's important to you this year? This year

is the year of AI, so we look at how best to introduce AI. Last year was special needs. Our obligation is to always listen. The third priority is user-friendly. The fourth is to create a sense of community.

**What role has collaboration, whether with government bodies, private institutions, or international partners, played in Aanaab's success?**

As a learning platform, you have to be more than client-centric and user experience-driven; you really have to work with everybody to bring something of value. So we have several types of partnerships. The first are content partnerships, like those we have with Cambridge and Harvard. Another is working with content experts outside traditional institutions. Then there are government partnerships, which among other things are key to giving you access to markets and data, like the National Technology Program for Development (NTDP) founded by MCIT.

**Where in the Saudi education sector would you like to see more SME involvement? And what area is ripest for EdTech innovation?**

The whole sector should be SME-driven. Think of education services and school operations: apart from a few large operators, a lot of school owners are SMEs. Their value proposition is that parents get to choose a unique school. For example, I have a child and want a specific curriculum for him, which is how it should be for everyone. So the sector is naturally SME-driven. I would like to see more support for education services across the board, but also for auxiliary services and support teams, because everything else is a supporting service: technology infrastructure, real estate, transportation, and safety. The second thing is that the nature of learning is rapidly changing. There are hybrid learning models, AI tutors and assessment techniques, etc. There are so many opportunities to be innovative.

# Shatha Alsaeed

General Manager of Entrepreneurship Planning,  
the Small and Medium Enterprises General Authority  
Monsha'at



**Monsha'at has support programs for SMEs in a wide variety of sectors. What impact do you think SMEs can have in the Saudi education sector?**

SMEs can catalyze transformative change in education by delivering both high-touch and high-tech solutions tailored to the Kingdom's highly sophisticated population. With the Saudi EdTech market projected to grow 13.3% per year between 2024 and 2032, SMEs are well positioned to offer innovative, agile, and personalized educational services that cater to a wide variety of needs. They can also offer agility in adapting to underserved regions, inclusive education needs, and niche learner segments. Given that youth make up the largest segment of Saudi Arabia's population and with digital literacy on the rise, SMEs have a ripe opportunity to shape Saudi Arabia's future workforce and align with Vision 2030's human capital agenda.

**Can you highlight some of the key programs or initiatives Monsha'at has introduced to enable entrepreneurship in the education sector?**

Education is key to Monsha'at's wider vision, which is why there have been so many initiatives to advance small business activity in the sector. In addition to partnerships with the Ministry of Education to host the annual "Education Week" initiative, which has been held since 2021 to highlight investment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the sector, Monsha'at has launched the University Startups Initiative, which helps students, faculty, and recent grads transform ideas into startups through accelerators, prototyping camps, and access to funding. It also launched the University Entrepreneurship Council, which links universities, investment valleys, and innovation centers, and the University Entrepreneurs Competition, which helps staff and students scale their projects via bootcamps, competitions, and financial incentives. Finally, it has the Future Entrepreneur Program, a program that exposes K-12 public school students to entrepreneurial challenges and business concepts.

**What challenges do education-focused SMEs and EdTechs face when trying to scale, and how can they overcome them?**

The education sector in Saudi Arabia is evolving quickly, creating opportunity and areas where SMEs can add real value. Scaling

companies often encounter practical hurdles such as longer adoption cycles in schools, the need to demonstrate measurable impact, acquiring growth capital, and ensuring solutions meet the highest standards of data security and privacy. At the same time, there is a strong appetite for digital transformation, with growing demand for innovative, user-friendly tools that support teachers, administrators, and learners alike. SMEs that focus on pilot programs, collect evidence of their impact, and design with compliance and inclusivity in mind are best positioned to succeed. Monsha'at plays an enabling role by offering model contracts, data frameworks, access to capital networks, and connections to decision-makers so that innovative businesses can focus on improving learning outcomes and contributing to the Saudi Vision 2030 goals.

**Monsha'at has been instrumental in advancing female-led entrepreneurship. What opportunities do you see for female entrepreneurs in education and EdTech?**

When I look at the wider market, it's clear that the K-12 and university segments, positions where female educators and entrepreneurs already excel, are particularly ripe for female leadership in education innovation. That's why Monsha'at supports women-led initiatives through university and early-stage startup programs that help them convert academic projects into ed-tech ventures.

**What advice would you give to aspiring entrepreneurs, especially young people, looking to start a business in the education sector?**

The first thing to do is correctly identify a genuine market need or pain point in schools, universities, or the wider education sector and then validate it by reaching out to potential users. Once you've identified your solution and developed a prototype, you then need to test it out in a classroom, school, or academic department to gather data, feedback, and other critical inputs. Along the way, I would also encourage people to leverage Monsha'at's diverse set of programs, several of which were mentioned earlier. Networking and pitching are also key, which is why we encourage aspiring entrepreneurs to keep an eye on all our events and to capitalize on the many opportunities we offer through partner institutions.

# UNIVERSITY- BASED SMEs & ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVES

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Saudi universities are supporting entrepreneurship through innovation hubs, incubators, and funding programs that empower students and researchers to turn ideas into impactful startups. From KAUST's deep tech accelerators and commercialization platforms to KFUPM's industry-integrated incubators and PNU's women-led entrepreneurship ecosystem, these institutions are driving a new wave of tech-based, student-driven ventures across the Kingdom.



# ENTREPRENEURSHIP UNITS AT TOP SAUDI UNIVERSITIES SPURRING INNOVATION



## King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST)

Known for its focus on research, innovation, and entrepreneurship, KAUST is building Saudi Arabia's knowledge economy by developing robust programs to support tech-based startups.



### KAUST Innovation & Economic Development

Connects students with industry, inventors, and entrepreneurs on and off campus to drive commercialization and startup creation.

**Commercialize**  
and protect KAUST's  
intellectual property

**Build**  
culture of  
entrepreneurship by  
creating knowledge-  
based businesses

**Attract**  
industry to KAUST  
to collaborate on  
research, employ  
KAUST graduates, and  
bring new technology  
to the Kingdom

**Create**  
a hub of innovation,  
research, and  
technology  
development at its  
on-campus research  
park<sup>108</sup>

### TAQADAM Accelerator

A joint initiative with SABB, TAQADAM supports early-stage startups from across Saudi universities by providing funding, mentorship, and training.



**6-month**  
incubation includes  
mentorship, access to  
network & funding



**\$40,000**  
in non-dilutive funding



**\$100,000**  
in follow-on funding to 10  
select startups<sup>109</sup>

### KAUST Innovation Ventures

Provides support for early-stage deep tech ventures founded at KAUST as part of larger effort to grow an innovation and tech investment community.



**Less than \$200,000**  
in VC to seed-stage startups



**Up to \$2 mn**  
in VC to early-stage startups<sup>110</sup>

### Entrepreneurship Center

Provides hands-on training and funding for KAUST scientists and students to turn their research into real impact and create companies that can change the world.

- Offer entrepreneurship and innovation training for all KAUST students and Saudis of all ages
- Accelerate new startup ideas with grant funding, training, and mentorship
- Drive corporate "intrapreneurship" with customized innovation workshops
- Solve pressing difficulties in food and water security, digital technology, and the environment through KAUSTxIgnite challenges<sup>111</sup>



## King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM)

Though traditionally a leader in engineering and petroleum sciences, KFUPM has expanded its entrepreneurship ecosystem significantly in recent years to include an array of SME-friendly incubators.



### KFUPM Business Incubator

Supports student and faculty startups through mentoring, funding access, and incubation services.



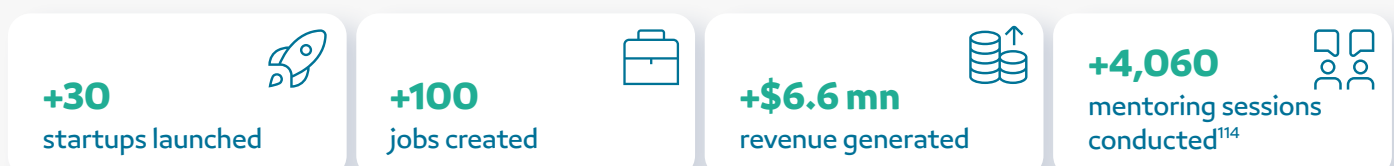
### Dhahran Techno Valley (DTV)

A strategic innovation zone adjacent to KFUPM that facilitates tech transfer, R&D collaboration, and corporate partnerships with Aramco and other energy companies.



### Entrepreneurship Institute (EI)

EI was launched in 2011 to offer education, training, research, and logistical and financial support that help the formation and growth of high-potential startups.





## Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University (PNU)

As the world's largest female university, PNU plays a crucial role in empowering Saudi female entrepreneurs. It has developed several programs aimed at innovation and SME development.



### PNU Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center

This was launched to support female-led startups with training, incubation, and mentorship in creative industries, health, education, and design.

**Supporting**  
the university's  
transformation  
into an innovative  
and pioneering  
university

**Empowering**  
women in the  
field of entrepre-  
neurship

**Advancing**  
intellectual prop-  
erty rights and  
patents

**Promoting**  
a culture of  
female innova-  
tion and entre-  
preneurship<sup>115</sup>

**4 medals**  
won at the  
International  
Exhibition of  
Inventions in  
Geneva in 2024<sup>116</sup>

### Incubators, hackathons, and entrepreneurial clubs

PNU is fostering a robust culture of entrepreneurialism and innovation through regular events and innovation challenges.

#### › NEXTG3N Hackathon

3-day event that gathers international and Saudi innovators in Riyadh to create practical solutions for education, digital inclusion, and emerging tech<sup>117</sup>

#### › Inspiring Entrepreneurs Forum

Panels, workshops, and exhibitor booths connecting investors, industry experts, and aspiring female entrepreneurs<sup>119</sup>

#### › Entrepreneurship Club

Fosters a campus-wide network of entrepreneurial-minded individuals through a student database, idea-sharing sessions, and external networking events in Riyadh and beyond<sup>118</sup>

#### › Riyaly Economic Club

Introduces students to financial responsibility through multiple e-learning platforms that empower women and encourage the creation startups in Saudi Arabia.<sup>120</sup>

### The Princess Noura University CODE Lab

This tech innovation hub aims to stimulate digital entrepreneurship by helping entrepreneurs and SMEs turn innovative digital ideas into market-ready startups.



#### **3 targeted audiences:**

Tech startups, college students, and entrepreneurs



#### **6 available services:**

Technical support, incubation program, mentorship and guidance, patents, center facilities, funding support<sup>121</sup>









## King Saud University (KSU)



Established in 1957 as the first university in the Kingdom and now in the top 150 worldwide, KSU has educated tens of thousands of Saudi and international students across a wide variety of academic disciplines.

## Riyadh Valley Co (RVC)

Established in 2010, RVC is a venture capital firm of King Saud University that partners with research and educational institutions to invest in student and faculty-led projects in a variety of fields to help turn Saudi Arabia's into a knowledge-based economy.

- 
**Biotech & healthcare**
- 
**Sustainable resources**
- 
**Logistics & transportation**
- 
**IT & telecoms**
- 
**Fintech**
- 
**Education**



**20**  
VC investments<sup>122</sup>



**22**  
strategic project  
investments<sup>123</sup>



# INNOVATION HUBS ENABLING DYNAMIC EDUCATION STARTUPS

A range of innovative and exciting programs have been created to support startups and entrepreneurs whose breakthroughs could be crucial to the education and EdTech ecosystems.

## Monsha'at University Startups Initiative

Launched in 2019 to promote an entrepreneurial culture among university staff, students, and faculty members, this program offers a variety of interactive resources for students and staff seeking to turn bold ideas into real companies.



**10-day**  
intensive prototype enhancement camps to transform innovative ideas into functional prototypes



**8-week**  
Entrepreneurship Challenge Program with workshops, trainings, and meetings with entrepreneurs and investors across diverse fields to help students launch thriving companies



**3-9 months**  
University Projects Accelerators to turn concepts into fully-fledged startups

The initiative combines a rigorous set of technical and entrepreneurial competency courses with



**Strengthening**  
entrepreneurship skills through a variety of programs, camps, and workshops.



**Offering**  
opportunities for the commercialization of graduate projects and for real-world entrepreneurial application.



**Encouraging**  
collaboration and partnerships between university staff and undergraduate students to cultivate an entrepreneurial environment within the university community<sup>124</sup>





# STUDENT-LED EDTECH INITIATIVES DRIVING PRIVATE SECTOR GROWTH

Regional university-based accelerators throughout the Kingdom are helping students with bright ideas turn their solutions into thriving EdTech and education-enhancing startups.

## Imam Mohammad bin Saud Islamic University Accelerator



### Nokhbah Academy

Offers personalized learning experience tools, consulting services, and preparatory courses for placement tests.



### Oluo Center for Digital Research

An academic platform that offers high-quality tools and resources to facilitate research and improve study outcomes.



### Almostawrq

A platform for female students to conveniently buy and sell textbooks without paying any fees.



## King Faisal University in Al-Ahsa Accelerator



### Tahdir App

A platform that supports daily administrative operations and improves educational outcomes.

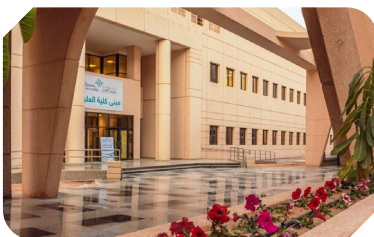


### Research Mate

A research solutions platform that helps scholars access better information in the healthcare field.



## Qassim University Accelerator



### Amneen

Uses GPS to track school bus routes and school-aged students' whereabouts to ensure no child is left behind.



### Barq

An advanced school bus management system that enables school supervisors to organize and monitor student trips and provide parents with real-time access to all trip details.





## ABOUT MONSHA'AT

Established in 2016, the Small and Medium Enterprises General Authority (Monsha'at) chief objective is to organize, support, develop, and sponsor the SMEs sector in accordance with best global practices.

Monsha'at deploys a wide range of initiatives that directly speak to the challenges that SMEs face in the market, with assistance being further broken down by company size and type. In addition to providing firms with critical administrative, technical, and financial support, Monsha'at also assists SMEs with marketing and human resources.

### Vision



To transform the Small and Medium Enterprises sector into a vital pillar for economic development in Saudi Arabia and an enabler for achieving Saudi Vision 2030 and beyond.

### Mission



Support SMEs' growth and competitiveness through building a supportive ecosystem and an entrepreneurial society, by driving the cooperation with our strategic partners in the public and private sectors and the non-profit sector, locally and internationally.

Please visit our website below for more information.



[www.monshaat.gov.sa](http://www.monshaat.gov.sa)



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