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# INTRODUCTION

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## FOREWORD

I am delighted to present you with the Sharjah World Book Capital Report. The report showcases the many ways in which we brought the spirit and ideals of the World Book Capital to life. Throughout the past year, Sharjah has transformed into a hive of extraordinary activity centred around books and reading. We launched our program of activities inspired by “**OPEN BOOKS. OPEN MINDS**” as our guiding theme, and by social inclusivity as our most important objective.

Our inclusive program of activities rallied all segments of society and created a new momentum that will carry us for years to come with a renewed sense of commitment to cultural development.

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We rolled out an ambitious program of events that targeted all members of our community without exception. Our inclusive program of activities rallied all segments of society and created a new momentum that will carry us for years to come with a renewed sense of commitment to cultural development. In every corner of our city, SWBC activities echoed together with the positive energy of thousands of residents and visitors who participated in our events.

The activities were organised to achieve six main goals. We aimed to raise more awareness about books and reading, foster an environment of knowledge, unify communities, honour our heritage, empower children and youth, and further develop our publishing industries. Through the Sharjah Beach Library campaign, which was a popular hit, we aimed to mix the love of reading with the fun of enjoying outdoor activities. The beach libraries were filled with books aimed at all ages and in different languages. In close partnership with government and non-government entities, we organised poetry readings, singing and storytelling events in industrial workers accommodations; industrial workers accommodations; we also gifted our valued industrial workers with more than fifty libraries filled with books in Urdu, English and Tagalog. The engagement with them was energizing for everyone involved, and it further fostered a sense of community based on a shared love of human expression through different cultural mediums.

Building on thousands of years of our heritage, we organised the Evolution of Arabic Calligraphy Exhibition and the Sharjah Arabic Poetry Festival. Arabic calligraphy and poetry are the ultimate expressions of the poetic beauty, diversity, and potential of the Arabic language. They are timeless treasures, and it was an honour to share our legacy and poetry with so many people from different parts of the world.

Furthermore, we proactively moved our dialogue and theme beyond Sharjah, through our participation in global initiatives, activities and conversations at international book fairs including London Book Fair 2019, Turin International Book Fair 2019, Moscow Book Fair 2019 and LIBER International Book Fair – Madrid 2019.

Staying true to our values, we organised the Sharjah Used Books Fair and the Kan Ya Ma Kan (Once Upon Time) Book Donation Campaign. Under the theme “Give Your Book a New Life”, the fair saw over ten thousand books displayed at symbolic prices to encourage reading and empower readers from every socioeconomic background with access to books at affordable prices. The Kan Ya Ma Kan Book Donation Campaign is our way to share our blessings and books with children around the world, especially those who are underprivileged or live in areas hit by conflict or hardship. Books entertain, stimulate the imagination, and impart knowledge, and we serve these children in the hopes that the words they read will help them to write a better future for themselves and their families.

In Sharjah, we take the cultural development of children very seriously. It is our way of building strong foundations for a brighter future for our city and its community. During the SWBC year, children were invited to participate in many activities and events, and hundreds of them obliged. We live by the promise that we will read until no strangers remain, and it is in this spirit that The Sharjah International Film Festival for Youth and Children opened a window for our children to learn about other cultures and perspectives. Our theme and manifesto are our guiding light and we welcomed activities that echo our message; because when we open our minds to embrace our fellow humans, we build bridges of peace and love to all. Children also enjoyed many reading, books and art activities, and their excitement and energy further fuel our commitment to continue providing them with a rich variety of cultural events throughout the year.

Building on our existing cultural infrastructure, we integrated many yearly events into our SWBC program of activities with additional emphasis to stay focused on our SWBC theme and objective. In this vein, we organized the 38th Sharjah International Book Fair, the Sharjah 19th edition of the Sharjah International Narrator Festival, the 4th edition of the Silent Book Exhibition at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair and many more. We also celebrated International Modern Language Day and World Braille Day with different activations across the city.

To sustain the momentum and reach out to all segments of our community, we organised book talks which saw a diverse number of authors from chefs to poets to novelists share their experience and their stories with a diverse audience. We organised a writing retreat for young and professional writers to equip them with more tools, sponsored a translation workshop for professionals, and held activities for librarians.

As you read through the report, you will find even more details about all the activities that were held under our SWBC program. I am very proud to say that it has been a very fruitful year for us in Sharjah.

The SWBC title and its success further cement our position as a leading cultural hub in our region. To culminate an incredible year of extraordinary activity, we launched the House of Wisdom; a 21st-century library inspired by the wisdom of Arab and Muslim scholars who influenced the world with the breadth and depth of their inquisitive minds. This library will be a cultural centre where the community can get together to enjoy cultural and reading activities while exploring different knowledge sources.

Sharjah after the SWBC will not be the same. We are more determined to develop our cultural infrastructure locally and grow our cultural partnerships and reach globally. I want to thank our partners in UNESCO and the supporters of our vision throughout the world. Together, we will continue building bridges of tolerance and peace through books and reading.



Sharjah is the third largest of the UAE's seven emirates, with its capital city of the same name centred on two lagoons fed by the Arabian Gulf. It is the only Emirate to have coastlines on the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman and as such its harbour is always bustling with trading vessels from the East. The city of Sharjah alone contributes 7.4% of the UAE's GDP. The publication industry plays a big role in Sharjah's economy, contributing over 238m AED (\$65m) every year and growing annually.

# ABOUT SHARJAH



Ruled by His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, the city has grown to become the UAE's preeminent centre for heritage, culture, and literature.



The city is vibrant and multicultural and has a population of 1.4m people from some 200 nationalities, making it a truly outward looking global community.

Sharjah's educational and cultural infrastructure is robust. It is the first emirate to establish a school and library in the United Arab Emirates: the Al Mahmoudiyah School in 1903 and the Al Mahmoudiyah Al Taymeya in 1909. It also has a long history of hosting cultural events. It was nominated by UNESCO as the 'Cultural Capital of the Arab World' in 1998 and already organizes many local, national and international fairs and conferences. In addition to the Sharjah International Book Fair and the Sharjah Children's Reading Festival, the Emirate hosts the International Government Communication Forum which brings together Government thought leaders from across the world to share best practices.

Sharjah is the first city in the gulf countries, the third among Arab countries, and the 19th globally to be endowed with the World Book Capital designation; this comes after Alexandria in 2002 and Beirut in 2009. With the World Book Capital designation Sharjah added to its rich heritage a new title, standing proudly alongside the following designations: The Capital of Arab Culture (1998), the Capital of Islamic Culture (2014), and the Capital of Arab Tourism (2015).



See Appendix A for personnel list

# THE ORGANISATION

**The Bid** was prepared by a dynamic team comprised of heads of non-government organisations and literary experts hailing from a wide range of backgrounds. Their tasks included:

**1.**

Preparing the bid and the plan for the yearlong program

**2.**

Meeting with key stakeholders to ensure a full rounded program.

**3.**

Establishing the Advisory committee and the Sharjah World Book Capital office members

**The Advisory Committee** was established shortly after comprising all participating organisations in Sharjah related to the fields of education, literature, and publication. Their responsibilities included:

**1.**

Preparing and executing all the events to be run throughout the year

**2.**

Promoting Sharjah and Sharjah World Book Capital title at every event

**3.**

Reporting results after the completion of every event



The Sharjah World Book Capital Office was also formed tasked with:

**1.**

Preparing the main events of the year hosted by Sharjah World Book Capital

**2.**

Promoting the Sharjah World Book Capital title locally and internationally throughout the year

**3.**

Coordinating and ensuring that all entities and events are running according to plan

**4.**

Raising awareness and promoting all the events running by the entities throughout the year

**5.**

Sponsoring new events, activities and entities that were established after the original bid

# OUR OBJECTIVES

## Sharjah World Book Capital's program was designed based on our six objectives:



### UNIFYING COMMUNITIES

Sharjah is known for its diversity, boasting a wealth of readers and intellectuals from various linguistic backgrounds and hundreds of nationalities. We aim to celebrate these cultures during the Sharjah World Book Capital by creating events and activities that not only cater to various sub-communities, but also encourage cross cultural understanding and harmony.



### FOSTERING KNOWLEDGE

We want to breed an innate love for reading in our communities. That is why we have created a series of activities and events (for different age groups and interests) that will instil the importance of reading in peoples' minds, make books easily accessible, and turn reading into a fun and rewarding hobby.



### HONOURING HERITAGE

For the love of our ancestors, our history, and our way of life — we tell the stories of our past to our new generation and to those who do not know us. So that they can understand our culture, benefit from our rich knowledge and scientific discoveries, and build upon what we have already created.



### EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Children are our future. They can build our nations and break down cultural barriers through understanding. That is why we have prepared a myriad of programs specially design for children and the youth to encourage a culture of reading and a thirst for knowledge. We aim to empower them so that they can achieve their own — and their nation's — aspirations and goals; this is especially important as Sharjah gears towards progressing its Emirate into a highly knowledge-based society.



### RAISING AWARENESS

We aim to cultivate a nation that is not only tolerant of underrepresented communities — including refugees, the disabled, and the visually impaired — but is inclusive of them. Through knowledge and awareness, we can support and empower all communities and help them become valuable contributors to society. That is why we have prepared a myriad of social campaigns and initiatives to boost community support of these struggling members.



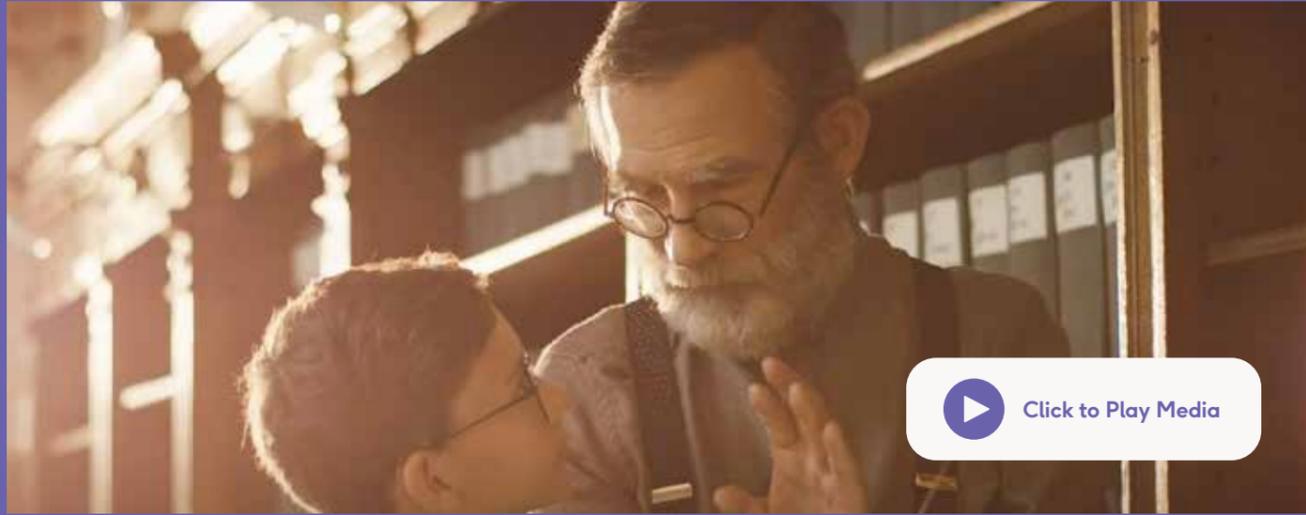
### DEVELOPING PUBLISHING INDUSTRIES

Books develop nations both socially and economically. There is an entire ecosystem that works in sync to produce a book — from researchers and writers, to publishers and distributors. We have designed an array of conferences, workshops, and activities that will empower each segment; our goal is to strengthen and develop industries, create new jobs, develop our economy and make Sharjah a publication city that can compete in the international market.

# OUR BRAND IDENTITY

SWBC created a brand identity which was used to celebrate and communicate the World Book Capital title and unify the activities and events running throughout the year.

See Appendix BA for SWBC identity references



The SWBC office set up one-to-one meetings with entities as well as workshops to teach them how to use the brand identity and how to communicate the Sharjah World Book Capital project to visitors of their events. Entities running each event were tasked to adhere to the SWBC branding guidelines and ensure that our logo and key messages were always part of their overall communication. All entities were requested to submit their artworks and creative ideas for approval by our design team before public release.

**In addition, SWBC produced over 10,000 branded materials to be distributed at events including international book fair participations. The merchandise included:**



- Informative brochures 14,500pcs
- Pencils 8,700pcs
- Notebooks 13,500pcs
- USBs 13,000pcs
- Pins 3,400pcs
- Bookmarks 13,250pcs
- Tote bags 13,500pcs

We used our promotion merchandise to raise and educate both locally and internationally through our partners even when we were not actively participating. All the materials were strategically crafted to increase Sharjah's exposure and highlight our belief in the power of books in uniting people and in the importance of intercultural communication.

We also designed customised merchandise for some events, such as the Book Friendly Schools campaign and Sharjah Beach Library initiative, to make them relevant and interesting. See Appendix BB for full merchandise list and images.

# THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Our integrated communication strategy was a critical component in the overarching success of the Sharjah World Book Capital celebrations through all its phases – right from the application process to winning the title and the opening ceremony, flowing into our extensive 365-day cultural agenda, and finally, the closing ceremony. It was the backbone which aligned the myriad cultural and literary activities we undertook and stood firmly on SWBC's six core pillars. A clear message house enabled us to take a holistic approach to the title's celebrations – steering our focus on education, history, heritage, arts, culture, literature, and children/family-centred initiatives.

Our strategy was simple but impactful. To develop and maintain a consistent local and international presence in the media and the minds of people, SWBC followed a multi-platform approach including online and offline mediums, advertising, social media, and data analysis.

## WEBSITE

AS MAIN COMMUNICATION TOUCHPOINT

- Our mission and manifesto
- Programme of events
- PR and gallery for all events
- Resources for partners such as logo and branding guideline downloads

 [www.sharjahwbc.com](http://www.sharjahwbc.com)

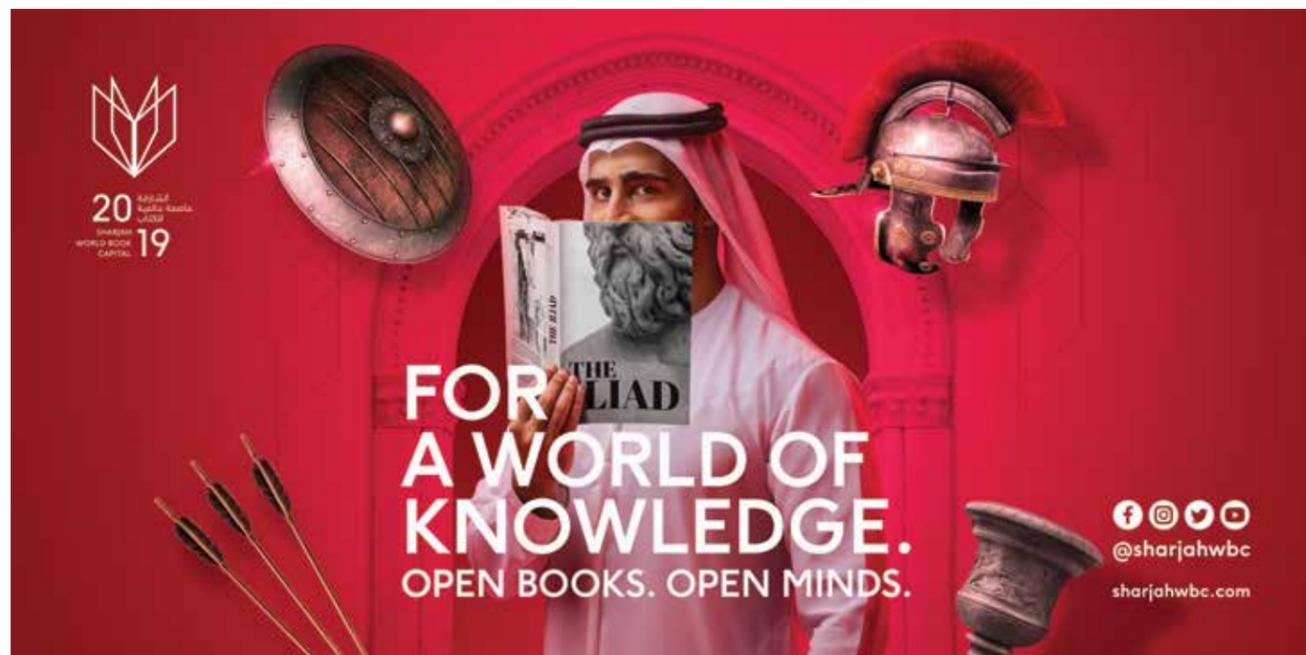


## ADVERTISING

- Paid advertising (outdoor, print, phone network ads, radio)
- Free advertising through partner spaces
- Paid Media Ads in Social media

## OTHER CHANNELS

- Social Media Engagement (YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook)
- Television and Radio presence and interviews
- On ground activations and participation
- PR including news and conferences
- Content creation with partners (publications and news media)



This hyper-communication approach helped the emirate gain worldwide appreciation as a city of strong cultural vision, and as the home of reading. We harnessed several offline media mediums such as newspapers, television, radio, billboards, and advertisements to reach out to our audience. Popular online media channels leveraged through the year included social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, in addition to professional platforms such as Publishing Perspectives and Bookseller. Other networks carrying forward our key messaging included Sharjah Media, AD News and Barq News; on the international level, SWBC gained exposure through Associated French Press, Euronews, and France24. See Appendix C for full media list

We relied equally on photography and creative videos to promote and recap all our public events, igniting the audience's cultural curiosities and immortalising the narrative of a city that advocates reading, believes in a unified community, and appreciates stories.

At every step of the way, we received proactive support from local, regional, and global media houses who were equally invested in our cause to promote reading and knowledge. Effective content was developed by various outlets to create a reliable and consistent stream of news content. The extensive coverage received over the course of more than a year helped shine the spotlight on the efforts and activities of the SWBC to the largest audience possible.



By the end of April 2020, SWBC had been mentioned in **5000+ media clippings** in diverse languages including Arabic, English, French, Russian, Italian, and Spanish and was published or broadcast from across the seven continents. We successfully engaged individuals of different age groups, nationalities, and interests through its active social media presence. The SWBC Instagram account [@sharjahwbc](https://www.instagram.com/sharjahwbc), garnered **2,149,578 profile impressions** over the course of the year, while our Facebook page adding over **1,650 followers** over the course of the year, and received **8420.91 average page impressions per day**. The engagement on **Twitter was also considerably high standing at 14,332.68**.

Examination of macros revealed a significant rise in the percentage of SWBC followers from 20 nations spanning US, Europe, Middle East, and South Asia. With **3,548 new followers**, the UAE recorded an **18.62% growth**, while Iraq's and Egypt's following spiked by 184% and 26% respectively. The percentage growth in followership in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Oman ranged between **35% – 48%**. **Users in the 25 – 34 years age group** were most active across all SWBC social media platforms.

# ACTIVITIES

## INAUGURATION WEEK

Sharjah World Book Capital heavily invested in the celebration of the World Book Capital title seeing it as an investment in our vision and future. Our celebration began a year ahead when HH Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, ruler of Sharjah, ordered the construction of the Scroll Monument and the House of Wisdom as new honorary landmarks celebrating the addition of a monumental new title in Sharjah's history. The Scroll Monument was completed for the opening ceremony while the House of Wisdom was planned to finish by the closing ceremony.

International guests arrived on the 21 April ready for a program of events the next day.

22 APRIL 2019

**The Cultural Program** gave international guests the opportunity to experience the best of Sharjah and discover why it is known as the cultural capital of the UAE. The tour was scheduled during the day on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup> and was optional. See *Appendix DA cultural program*.



**The Gala Dinner** took place in Al Noor Island on the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Guests were warmly welcomed onto the island with a lively Emirati folklore band performance that surely set the tone of the evening, which started with some networking time and was shortly followed by a tour of the island.

A round of speeches were made that not only inspired but also gave an overview of all to look forward to in the upcoming year. First up, was an inspiring speech by Bodour Al Qasimi, the Head of the SWBC Advisory Committee, followed by Markos Bolaris, Deputy Minister of Athens. Next, came speeches by Ernesto Ottone, Assistant Director-General for Culture UNESCO; Hugo Setzer, President of the International Publishers Association; Gerald Leitner, Secretary General of IFLA; Nor Hisham Dahlan, Mayor of Kuala Lumpur; and ElSeed, who won the UNESCO Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture. The round of speeches concluded with Nassir Shamma – the UNESCO Artist for Peace prize winner – who gave a few words to mark this memorable occasion before stringing a beautiful oud performance to attending guests.

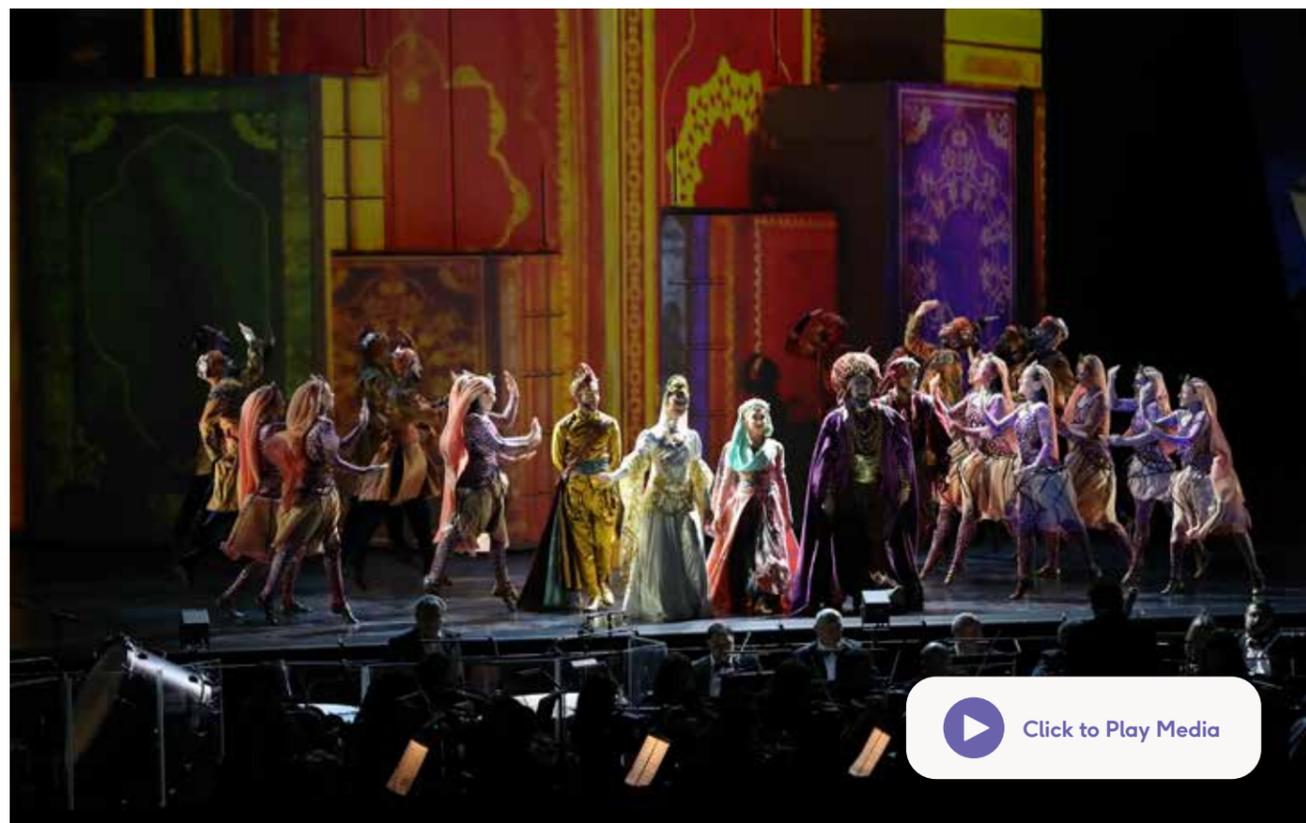
23 APRIL 2019



**The Inauguration Ceremony** commenced with the unveiling of The Scroll Monument (See *Appendix DB for construction details*), which was commissioned by HH Sheikh Dr Sultan Bin Muhammed Al Qasimi in celebration of the SWBC title. The new landmark was adorned with a 3D mapping show that had guests in awe. Guests were taken through the plans for the House of Wisdom library and cultural centre which would be built by the new monument and in honour of the SWBC title.

After dinner and a short refreshing break, guests met at the iconic Al Majaz Amphitheatre to witness the relay ceremony and the most awaited performance of the year. The evening began with words from HH Sheikh Dr Sultan Bin Muhammed Al Qasimi whose wisdom and vision guided Sharjah to this inspiring moment in time. Shortly after, Mr. Ernesto Ottone, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Culture, gave his speech on behalf of the UNESCO Director-General, Audrey Azoulay, before the relay ceremony marked the official handing over of the World Book Capital from Athens to Sharjah.

23 APRIL 2019



**The 1001 Nights: The Last Chapter** was the most awaited performance of the year and it was the perfect ending for an already eventful day. The show was commissioned for the SWBC celebrations. More than a year in the making, the show was performed by 537 artists, acrobats, innovators, technologists, and storytellers along with a 51-piece live orchestra.

In the new tale, inspired by an Arabian classic, an aging Scheherazade sends her children on a quest for hard-won magical objects she needs. By evening's end, the audience learns that they are the necessities of writing including a scroll and a quill pen, noting the lesson to be learned "the most beautiful book is the one that hasn't yet been written."

The show reflected Sharjah's deep love for culture and education; with it, Sharjah crossed a significant cultural milestone and reinforced its commitment to human development through a grand celebration of the arts. The show ran for 5 days and was attended by nearly 10,000 guests.

25-26 APRIL 2019



**The IFLA Arab Regional Conference** scheduled during the inauguration week, welcomed many key WBC stakeholders. The two-day conference ran under the theme 'Impact of IT & Digital Knowledge on Arab Organisations and Business Environment' and brought together library professionals, information technology (IT) and other digital sector experts from various Arab countries to discuss and analyse the great transformations in information generation and consumption led by digital and technological advancement, especially in the region's libraries and sector. In its fourth edition, the conference plays a key role in helping Sharjah develop more libraries, promote knowledge locally and in the Arab world, and keep abreast with the latest developments in the library and information technology sectors.



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

There were more than 100 main events running throughout the year by one or more entities in collaboration and celebration of SWBC. The following activities were some of highlights of the year organised to fulfil one or more pillars (indicated by the icons).

See Appendix DC for full events roadmap



UNIFYING COMMUNITIES



FOSTERING KNOWLEDGE



HONOURING HERITAGE



EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND YOUTH



RAISING AWARENESS



DEVELOPING PUBLISHING INDUSTRIES



**The Silent Book Exhibition** hosted at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair aimed to raise awareness about “silent books”, which are books that use imagery to tell a story without words. These books have been particularly useful within migrant and refugee communities because they can be understood in all languages – even by illiterate children. The books promote a culture of reading and a thirst for knowledge in refugee camps; empower children through education; and are used as therapy to ease their anxiety and struggles. The exhibition was visited by 500 guests and is scheduled to run annually.



**The Emirati Book Fair** was the first event of its kind in the UAE and the region geared towards celebrating the works and accomplishments of Emirati writers and intellectuals; shedding light on emerging literary talents in the UAE and offering an exclusive national cultural platform to honour Emirati writers. The event was designed for industry professionals and the public; it had an exciting line up of panel discussions and book exhibitions showcasing the latest homegrown publications brought in by 25 Emirati publishers and created by a stellar cast of Emirati authors. 160 UAE writers signed their publications during their participation in the Emirati Book Fair. HH Sheikh Dr Sultan Bin Muhammed Al Qasimi also ordered the allocation of a AED500,000 (\$136,126) grant in support of the Emirati Book Fair, which reflects His Highness' keenness to promote locally-produced literature within the UAE's book industry by supporting Emirati writers and intellectuals, and ultimately enhancing their presence in libraries.

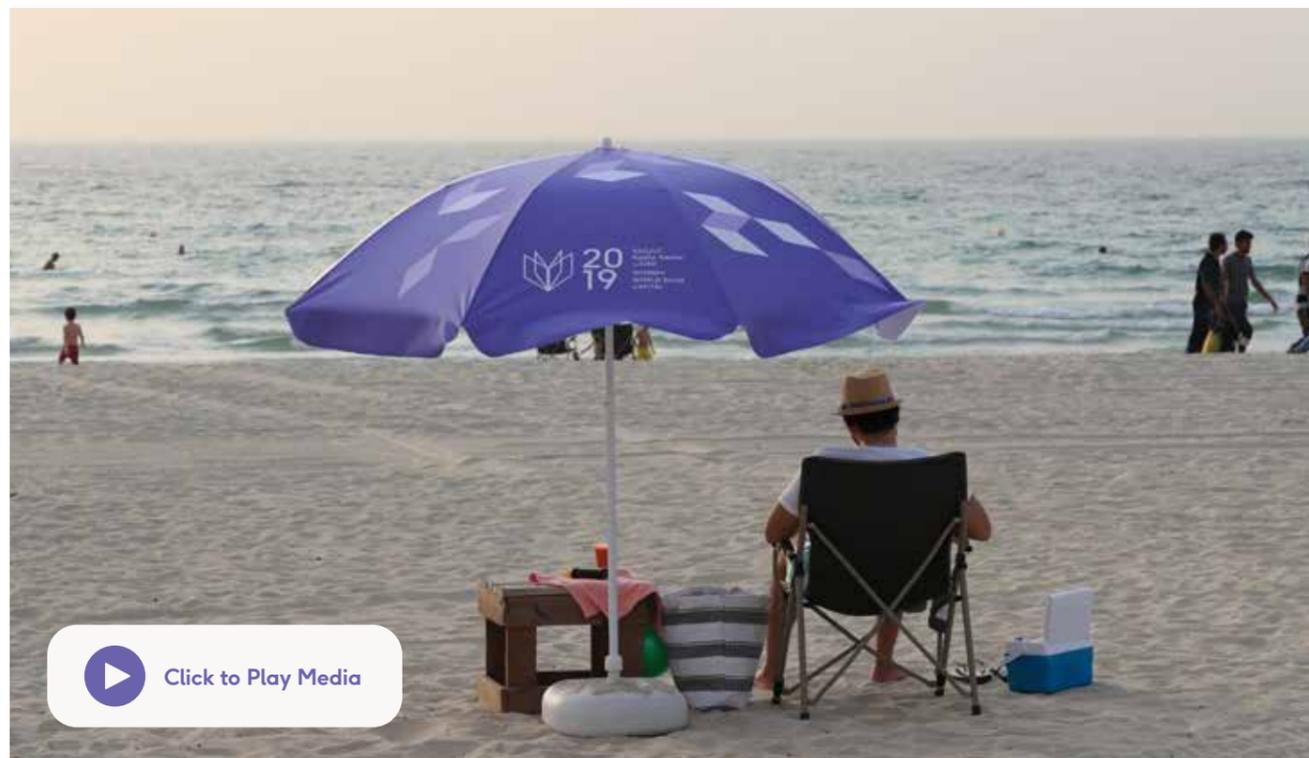


**The Silk Road Book Exhibition** examined a new ‘Road’ connecting the East and West by means of stories that travel through books to young readers in far off places. The exhibition brought together a wide collection of narrative, picture, and general-knowledge books on China: 100 titles testifying to publishing excellence in Europe and the US. Some were by Chinese writers living in the West, others by non-Chinese authors who paid tribute to Chinese culture. In both cases, the blend produced many beautiful and informative books that further exemplify the beliefs of SWBC that books unite people and can build harmonious co-existence. The exhibition was visited by more than 100 guests of all ages.



**‘From Bat, to Book, to Bollywood’** campaign was created specifically to target the large Indian community and other subcommunities that watch Bollywood movies. The aim was to capture movie and cricket lovers and convert them to avid book readers because watching cricket and Bollywood are popular pastime activities in the Indian community, while reading books is reserved for schools and education. We wanted to educate the community that reading can be just as exciting as watching a movie because it allows the reader to imagine a world in their mind just the way they like it. In this event we brought together the writer of the book “The Zoya Factor”, Anuja Chauhan, and the beloved Bollywood star Soonam Kapoor, who was the main character of the recently released Bollywood movie adaptation. The nearly 500 attending guests enjoyed a panel discussion about the magic of books, the art of writing, and how important reading is as a practice for both stars and for members of the audience. We also distributed over 1000 books of the Zoya Factor to guests of the event and the book fair which was purchased from a local publisher.





**The Accessible Publishing Workshop** was given by the Accessible Books Consortium (ABC) to participating publishers of the region. The workshop taught publishers good practices to boost the production of e-books and other digital publications and broaden the ways publications can deliver accessible content to people who are blind or otherwise print disabled. The workshop came after the signing of an MoU to promote the publication of accessible learning materials for print disabled children in the UAE and Arab region. The MoU stipulates that 1001 Titles entity will support the production of 200 accessible Epub3 books to further under Kalimat Foundation's 'Ara' (I See) initiative which empowers children with special needs by facilitating their access to knowledge.



**Book Friendly Schools Campaign** was a bid to deepen the love of reading and storytelling amongst the students of Sharjah's public and private schools and heighten their awareness on the importance of cultivating reading habits as a lifelong practice. The two-month sociocultural campaign targeted 30 schools across the Emirate and included a mini book fair; workshops on art, craft and culture; interactive reading sessions; and a distribution of 50 books for each of their libraries.



**The Sharjah Beach Library** initiative aimed to lure beachgoers into the world of written words. The seven libraries were spread across all beaches of Sharjah and each carried more than 150 titles in various languages, genres, and caters to all age groups. The launch events at each location included a series of entertainment and cultural activities that welcomed nearly 1500 guests. Beachgoers had the opportunity to participate in games, competitions, and receive a packed beach tote full of SWBC merchandise they can use at the beach including an umbrella, towel, and beach ball. The lifeguard posts on the beach were decorated with illustrations by six artists of different nationalities that were inspired by international children's books and stories that are set in the sea.





[Click to Play Media](#)



The **Read the Movie and Read the Play** initiatives were launched to remind movie and theatre attendees that some of their favourites are adaptations of books. We surprised them with free books of popular movies showing on the silver screen (including Dr Sleep, Frozen 2, and Dr Dolittle) as well as theatre performances showing at the iconic Dubai Opera (including 'Broken Wings', 'Le Petit Prince', and 'The Kite Runner'). Our aim was to foster knowledge by encouraging attendees to relive the best moments at home by reading the book. Books were purchased from a local bookstore with 500 for each movie and 300 for each play purchased and distributed.



[Click to Play Media](#)



The **Sharjah International Library Conference** welcomed more than 400 librarians, archivists and industry professionals from across the globe who outlined strategic shifts that will define the next generation of library services and shared their expertise on a host of pressing issues, challenges and opportunities for the entire industry. The event included workshops on important topics like setting concrete standards for libraries in higher education and putting them into action, shining light on new cataloguing concepts and applications, and building empathy and understanding through curriculum and VR.



**Etisalat Award Publishers Workshop, 'Warsha'**, is a trailblazing annual initiative by the Etisalat Award for Arabic Children's Literature. This innovative programme offered 45 participants workshops in illustration, writing, and publishing with the aim of building the capacities of young individuals in the creation of books that are both rooted in local Arabic culture and that soar to meet international standards. The workshops were presented by acclaimed trainers and specialists in the fields of Children's and Young Adult literature who focused on key elements such as how to write quality children's books, and critiquing and developing written drafts.





The **'Tarjem' Translation Workshop** was a specialised developmental workshop for 20 mid-career translators selected from seven countries which aims to boost translators' skills in both Arabic and English and comes as part of Sharjah's continued dedication to promote the translations movement into and out of Arabic. It was part of Sharjah's Market Focus programme at the London Book Fair 2020, which partly focuses on the emirate's growing role as a regional translation hub and its latest efforts in the local and regional publishing sectors specific to boosting Arabic-English and English-Arabic translations.



The **#BookTalks** initiative in partnership with Al Rawi Bookstore and Café brought book lovers and their favourite stories closer together through monthly meetings featuring a special author and their books; the sessions included book signings, passage readings, and discussions. Books selected included some of the greatest stories told in various genres in both Arabic and English, including Chris Gardener's Pursuit of Happiness, which was launched in Arabic during the November session. Other famous authors included Lola Shoneyin, Ahlam Mostaghanemi, Badria Al-Bishr, Muhammad Alwan, Ahmed Murad and Saud Al-Sanousi. The initiative received welcome 1130 guests across the eight events and received more than 3,000 unique Instagram engagement during the events.





[Click to Play Media](#)



[Click to Play Media](#)



**The Cooks & Books** initiative, also in partnership with Al Rawi Bookstore and Café, celebrated local and international chefs and their cookbooks. The events aimed to promote reading by giving food enthusiasts the opportunity to look at cookbooks through the eyes of their authors and get to interact with the book and chefs in a new way. Nearly 165 guests attended the events which included live cooking shows and competitions. The host, Al Rawi Bookstore and Café also received a 100,000AED sponsorship from a local organisation to continue this event post SWBC.



**The Creative Writing Retreat** offered 10 writers a unique opportunity to sharpen their writing and enhance their skills. Selected Arab writers from the UAE and abroad enjoyed a 10-day immersive experience with some of the region's greatest writers and publishers' as their mentors. The course included workshops and group discussions, as well as free writing sessions and one-on-one coaching time. The sessions have been designed to empower writers from all aspects and covered topics such as the varying writing stages; basics of free writing; basics of creative writing; how to choose the right artist and illustrator; and how to select the right publishing house.





**The Sharjah Children's Reading Festival 2019**, on its 11<sup>th</sup> edition, was the largest in terms of participation and activities since its inception. There were around 2,600 activities scheduled by 198 guests from 56 countries. The festival hosted over 134 exhibitors and 167 publishers specialised in children's literature; but it has gone beyond just being an exhibition, developing into an integrated event that enriches the knowledge of visitors with science and literature. The event welcomed more than 300,000 visitors including children, their families, and field professionals.



**The Sharjah International Narrator Forum** was launched in Sharjah in 2001 to celebrate the oral tradition recounted by narrators and informants, to honour the elderly and leverage their rich heritage and experience in writing history, and to document and preserve the oral heritage of the UAE community. Approximately 97 participants including experts, researchers, storytellers, and media from 43 countries participated in the cultural programme, which included public events as well as training workshops on writing, narrating and the UAE cultural heritage. The forum welcomed over 4,050 visitors.



**The 'Read Dream Create' Campaign for Children** encourages interaction between children and books by building their capacity in reading, writing, innovation, and creativity through children's stories. The campaign also tries to better understand the needs of the Arab child to identify critical issues and topics that should be addressed in Arabic children's literature. During the campaign, there were three main events occurring. First, students from various schools across Sharjah were visited by three well-known Emirati authors and a storyteller for a one to one session of reading with the children. Second, book clubs were also set up for students with each participant receiving a free book. During the meetings, authors discussed the plot and answered any questions with students. Lastly, the campaign ran a competition for story writing and illustrating of children's books that received 90 submissions. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the event adapted to virtual meetings and engagements. Since its launch, the initiative has organised more than 200 reading activities that included 20 workshops for children librarians and teachers as well as specialised workshops on dealing with dyslexia. The campaign has visited more than 60 schools and reached 6,000 students. The campaign will continue annually with the aims to help more students across the UAE.



**The Access Sharjah programme** was launched this year to support innovative start-ups from around the world venturing into the publishing and digital content sector. It comes as part Sharjah's mission to support entrepreneurs and start-ups in the publishing and digital content sectors and in celebration of the 'Sharjah World Book Capital 2019' title. The programme will help promising start-ups launch their business in Sharjah and help them reach their target market. The best performing start-up will also receive a \$100,000 (around Dh367,000) funding to boost its operations. The program also assists start-ups by connecting them with stakeholders and potential clients, organising workshops and training sessions, and offering them free office space to start their business. The programme is based on the long-term strategic development vision of Sharjah to boost its human capital, build a strong knowledge-based society, and create opportunities in the emirate for start-ups from all over the world.



**Sponsoring Arabic Podcast** shows by Finyal Media, a local start-up that won an Access Sharjah grant. Finyal is the first of its kind content production company in the Middle East, which has been creating and monetising an entire network of podcasts series specifically targeting young Arab listeners. The sponsorship is part of SWBC's commitment to supporting UAE-based entrepreneurs and developing Arabic creative content production, especially on digital and new media platforms that have greater outreach and scalable impact. It comes as a result of Sharjah's recognition of a rapidly growing youthful population in the UAE who are digitally connected and seeking out more and more diverse content. The partnership drives learning and exchange in the UAE, and economically empowers young entrepreneurs in the creative industries who will strengthen the nation's SME sector.



**The Hans Christian Andersen Exhibition** "Fairytales Come True: Worlds from the Imagination of Hans Christian Andersen" is an interactive and experiential celebration of the acclaimed writer's life and works. The exhibition was created to promote a culture of reading among children and young people and open their minds to the remarkable wonders of story books by engaging all their senses through 15 interactive rooms. Happening alongside the exhibition was a series of workshops and activities in both Arabic and English designed to enhance children's creative and thinking skills. Including storytelling, creative writing, and arts and crafts sessions. All free of charge. This exhibition was the first of its kind in the Arab region and was scheduled to run for three months from March to May. It was launched and ran for two weeks with more than 200 visitors before having to shut down to align with COVID-19 restrictions and safety. However, there are plans for a reopening and a regional tour in the future. The exhibition will also be available as a virtual tour to engage children staying at home during these tough times.





[Click to Play Media](#)



**The Anti-piracy of Books Awareness Campaign** is a new animation created by SWBC to combat illegal digital downloading of books. The animated public service announcement takes a light-hearted approach in raising awareness; the story beautifully tells the tireless process of creating a book and encourages viewers to think twice before download illegal copies and instead buy them to support the people and industry that creates these books. Upon release, the animation ignited pivotal discussions in the Arab region; some providing solutions to high costs and how to deter illegal downloads, while others commenting that they never knew it was illegal. The commercial has been created for use by any entity who wishes to raise anti-piracy awareness free of cost.



**“Kan Yama Kan” book donations** for refugees was launched to support underprivileged children around the world through the power of reading. Quality children’s books are collected through book donation campaigns set up throughout the UAE then redistributed to partners who deliver them to children living in areas that struggle to gain access to books and education as a result of social or natural disasters, unrest, and wars. This year, we collected 500 books from the community during the month of Ramadan. On World Refugee Day, we organised a visit to the Big Heart Library in the Emirati Jordanian Camp in Jordan to donate 4500 books including those collected by the campaign, as well as set up fun workshops and reading sessions. These books serve as a source of knowledge, entertainment, and psychological support for hundreds of children and young adults in these camps.





“An Old Book. A New Life.” book recycling campaign is a program scheduled to be implemented across Sharjah. We have partnered with Bee’ah, a leading UAE environmental management company, and the Districts and Villages Affairs Department to set up book recycling containers in each of the 10 suburban council buildings in Sharjah. Our main aim is to teach students and their families as well as schools and teachers the importance and ease of recycling. We planned to launch the program with a social media awareness campaign to coincide with the end of the school year (and the best time to recycling books). However, due to COVID-19 remote schooling, we have postponed the program until it is safe again for all to participate.



**Supporting Conakry, Guinea (World Book Capital 2017).** This included the restoration of the Djibril Tamsir Niane Library as an international outreach initiative by Sharjah. The library, which contained more than 10,000 of the nation’s richest literatures and publications, was partially destroyed by a horrific fire accident in 2012. Among the affected were the works and books of professor Djibril Tamsir Niane, a world-leading author and one of Africa’s most admired scholars. Sharjah’s involvement contributed to the renovation of the library as well as the restoration of as many of its publications, documents, and archives as possible. The funds will also be used to develop a new inventory system to ensure the safety and security of the library’s books, as well as explore different options for the digitalization network that will streamline all of the library’s services and books to visitors.

SWBC also funded other initiatives in support of Conakry, namely Wroclaw World Book Capital’s ambitious initiative to provide 100,000 school textbooks to empower children in Conakry. SWBC also supported UNESCO’s 2,000 book donation from its own collection to 10 universities in Guinea.



**Sponsoring the Swahili Literary Festival** was our way of joining the Swahili community in acknowledging its heroes and intellectual history. The annual event is a celebration of the rich intellectual, cultural, and literary history along the Swahili coast. The festival aims to shed light on literary forms from the Swahili language by engaging writers, scholars, artists, thinkers, and the Swahili community in a variety of discourses. By joining the efforts, we help to enrich and preserve the language as well as bridge the gaps between the old and the new Swahili literature and art forms.



#### **Restoring the McMillan Memorial Library Eastlands (Makadara)**

is another international outreach initiative by Sharjah, which pledged full financial support to restore and modernise one of Africa’s iconic libraries’ branches. The community centre will receive \$482,643 to go towards increasing the capacity, building a cosy environment for visitors, and integrating technology for the new era of libraries. Once complete, it will not only become a key location for reading and information exchange, but a community space where African aspirations and endeavours can turn into reality.





**The Sharjah International Book Fair 2019** is the third largest book fair in the world and has completed its 38<sup>th</sup> edition. In celebration of the WBC title, the programming for the year was enriched even further to attract greater international exposure and participation. There were over 175 writers from 68 countries participating in 987 events that included cooking demonstrations; panel discussions; speeches; readings and book signings. The event also hosted a mass author signing that was endorsed by the Guinness World Record as the largest such event in the category of “most authors signing their own book simultaneously in one location”. The fair was given a grant of 4.5 million dirhams (US\$1.2 million), by HH Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Muhammed Al Qasimi, for book acquisitions from exhibiting publishers to update Sharjah’s library collections. The 11-day event drew a record 2.52 million visitors.



**Sharjah was celebrated as Guest of Honour in 7 cities.**



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**The New Delhi Book Fair 2019** celebrated Sharjah as Guest of Honour. The Vice President of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu, opened the Sharjah pavilion as a highlight of the emirate’s distinguished status. The Sharjah pavilion was home to various activities including a poetry reciting session and a literature symposium titled “India as seen by Emirati poets”. In addition, Sharjah has produced Hindi translations of 57 Arabic language books by Emirati and Arab authors. During our stay, the Sharjah Book Authority hosted a dinner gathering to network and promote the new Sharjah Publishing City and all its great potential to potential stakeholders.



**The London Book Fair 2019** welcomed Sharjah World Book Capital as it organised a special reception to shed light on the efforts that drove the Emirate’s election as the 19th World Book Capital City. Attendees were introduced to Sharjah’s most significant cultural achievements and were taken through the 365-day cultural programme that SWBC has designed to celebrate this prestigious title, under the unique theme ‘Open Books. Open Minds’. LBF offered an essential global platform to promote SWBC’s plans and programmes that were implemented later; and our participation proved to successfully serve as a bridge that connects Sharjah to international cultural entities, publishers, authors, intellectuals, and academia.



**At the Turin International Book Fair 2019**, Sharjah was celebrated as the Guest of Honour. Supervised by Sharjah Book Authority (SBA), the emirate’s pavilion hosted a series of activities including seminars, workshops, and cultural shows such as traditional Emirati dances and songs. Sharjah also translated 57 Emirati book titles into Italian for the first time; it comes as a cross-cultural celebration and a way for Sharjah to bridge the gaps of understanding and partnerships between the two nations. SWBC organised a panel discussion with hosted guest Sheikh Faisal bin Sheikh Mansour, Secretariat of the Kuala Lumpur World Book Capital 2020. The discussion highlighted the issues of low attention span and the loss of interest in reading in the “Insta” era and provided solutions as to how to reengage the young generation and build healthy reading habits in a world increasingly shaped by technology.



**The Moscow Book Fair 2019** hosted Sharjah as a “Guest City”; during which Sharjah took the opportunity to present and educate Russians and other international visitors of the gems of Emirati and Arab cultures. SWBC hosted a panel discussion in support of the World Book Capital initiative with SWBC representative, Amira Bin Faris, and UNESCO representative Ian Denison. The discussion educated attendees on the history of World Book Capital, how cities can become a WBC city, as well as the significance of this initiative.



**Liber International Book Fair 2019** celebrated Sharjah as “Guest of Honour”. During this event, we took advantage to celebrate our similarities by telling the story our shared history taking Arabs and Spanish attendees through a series of cultural sessions and seminars highlighting the deep historical ties that connecting us. The Sharjah pavilion showcased a collection of 70 books written by Emirati and Arab authors and novelists translated to Spanish under the supervision of Sharjah



Sharjah World Book Capital prides itself in partnering and collaborating with a myriad of international and local entities (See Appendix DD for full list) to promote reading and education and boost the publishing industry.

On a government and national level, our partners helped with the planning and execution of the program and events. Each entity aided in whichever way they can. Some offered their expertise and consultation, while others ran small services such as permits and designs. Many of them aided in the promotion of our events and even offered free advertising space on ground and on TV. The Emirates Postal office promoted our title by creating a unique postage stamp, while the UAE Central Bank created a limited edition commemorative 50AED coin. Sharjah Tourism helped promote the title by providing us free ad space on Burj Khalifa – the tallest tower in the world located in Dubai which can target thousands of tourists and residents a day. Al Majaz Amphitheatre created a show that will be a legacy taken around the world, while Sharjah Investment and Development Authority built infrastructures that will be home for books and conferences for generations to come. The list of entities and means of collaboration are endless; but without every entity listed, the Sharjah World Book Capital would not have been able to run the most successful year of events it has ever seen.



# ACTIVITIES

## CLOSING WEEK

Sharjah planned to end the year with a bang through a memorable closing ceremony that would bring together everyone that made this year possible including participating organisations, international guests, and UAE residents. We also had plans to celebrate Kuala Lumpur as World Book Capital 2020 during the Sharjah Heritage Week which happens in the week of the UNESCO World Heritage Day (April 18th). However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, original plans were cancelled. Instead we decided to take the celebrations to the digital world.

13 APRIL 2020

**The 10 Day Countdown** to the relay ceremony was turned into a visual work of art through 3D mapping on the Scroll Monument – back to where the celebrations all began. For 10 days, the monument showcased SWBC's logo, goals, and achievements, and counted down the days left to hand over the WBC to Kuala Lumpur. On the final day, we ran a 60 second clock which ended with a congratulatory message to Kuala Lumpur. We waved their flag proudly on our Scroll Monument for the whole day to educate all where WBC will be next. This countdown was filmed in parts and ran across our social media accounts to remind invite our followers to join in on the celebrations.



22 APRIL 2020

**The Closing Ceremony** was scheduled for 6:00pm through a live stream airing on Youtube Live, Facebook Live and Instagram Live. During which, Bodour Al Qasimi, Head of the SWBC Advisory Committee, gave a heart-warming speech that not only commemorated a year full of SWBC achievements, but also reminded us all that now more than ever through these toughs times, that the power of books will unite us and make us stronger. The speech ended with a congratulatory message to Kuala Lumpur and the packing of the WBC trophy, officially marking the handing over.

# COVID-19 RESPONSE

One of the greatest challenges we faced during our tenure as WBC are the restrictions and heightened fear of participation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many events were cancelled after they have been produced such as the Hans Christian Andersen exhibition, which was a costly event. But being Sharjah, we did not let this slow us down. In fact, Sharjah and their many entities rose to the occasion and proved once again that with determination, the power of books can do so much for a society. These are the most notable reactions in response to COVID-19:

## SWBC Book Hampers

On International Women's Day, SWBC gifted hampers to women with items that encourage them to take ease their anxieties and take care of themselves. We provided them with a tea set and water bottle, a yoga mat, as well as some books to curl up and read.

SWBC donated 1500 books to the Dubai Health Authority book hamper project which aimed to boost morale of quarantined patients and the front-liners helping them (doctors and staff). SWBC contributed 1500 books to this caused which were purchased from a local bookstore; we left words of support in each book to share a message of love to those who need it most.

We also created a hamper for International Children's Book Day to keep children's minds at ease and well entertained while spending all their time at home. 250 hampers were produced and each included games, stickers, and eight books. This was one of many ways the SWBC tried to encourage families to reach out for reading times with their children during these tough times and it worked; the hampers received online traction through social media and SWBC was contacted by many parents wanting boxes for their children.

## Free Access E-books

The Sharjah Public Libraries offered the public free access to their over 6,000,000 electronic resources and audiobooks. The initiative comes as a solution to not only help people stay entertained during their free time but also help workers attain important new skills for work adaptations (being fired from their jobs or having to work remotely), and help educators and students get essential resources needed during these tough times when going to libraries and getting credible sources of information is not an option.

## Free Access to Audiobooks

Sharjah World Book Capital (SWBC) partnered with audiobook platform Kitab Sawti to offer a free 3-month membership to 5,000 people around the world. Kitab Sawti is the world's largest Arabic language audiobook library and offered thousands of educational and entertainment audiobooks to aid people staying at home. The partnership comes as part of Sharjah's efforts in supporting the knowledge creation industry in Arabic format as well as giving all members of society easy access to education and entertainment both locally and internationally.

# LEGACY

Of these many activities mentioned, there are some activities which have been created to ensure that we leave a legacy that is to be remembered and utilised for decades to come. Most notably:



**Establishing the House of Wisdom.** The new iconic library and cultural centre was commissioned in honour of the Sharjah World Book Capital title. It is designed as a model for future libraries that blend traditional and digital sources of knowledge, interactive learning and contemporary pedagogy in a unique aesthetic featuring multipurpose halls. The project extends over 12,000 square metres, has two floors which host a 105,000-book library; discussion halls; reading areas (both indoors and outdoors in the garden); and a children's education space. It is the grandest contribution to Sharjah's several public offerings where books and knowledge can be openly accessed by people of all age groups and nationalities. It has been designed to be the future destinations for important conferences and events as well spaces for courses and educational sessions. The House of Wisdom is not only a symbol of Sharjah's accomplishments over 40 years, but it is the legacy we leave for the generations to come – to learn and become the pride of their nation.



[Click to Play Media](#)

The **1001 Nights** performance was commissioned in celebration of the WBC title; with it, Sharjah crossed a significant cultural milestone and anchored itself in the world of arts and performance. Through it, Sharjah plans to take increase its international exposure via a world tour with the aims of educating peoples across the world of this small but mighty city in the Arab region. The 1001 Night's story was also published into a book available in Arabic, English and French, which we plan to promote in every international outreach activity henceforth. Close to 3000 copies were produced and distributed. By doing so, we aim to boost Sharjah's reputation as a publishing city, appealing to those in the arts and literary fields.

The **SWBC Anthology Book**, called "Lungs of the Sea: New writings from Arab World" in Arabic, gave emerging Arab writers and poets the opportunity to get some of their works officially published in a contemporary Arabic language anthology book. This, as we all know, will significantly improve their chances of getting more of their works picked up by publications. Wanting to support young talents into advancing in their careers, we opened the submissions to talents that were born after 1980 only. Of the 500 entries, 50 were selected and it included a variety of stories, poetry, narrative chapters, and nomadic narratives. The talents included 19 women and 31 men from 19 countries. The nominated works were chosen by an editorial committee composed of an elite group of critics and authors appointed by SWBC. We produced 1500 books planned for gift distribution and sale.



# BUDGET DETAILS

## YEAR 2017

ACTIVITIES	Budget/AED	Budget/US Dollars
Supporting UNESCO book donations to Conakry (UNESCO book donation to 10 universities)	642,000.00	174,456.52
Restoring the Djibril Tamsir Niane Library in Conakry		
Supporting UNESCO school textbook donations to children in Conakry (in collaboration with Wroclaw WBC)		
<b>Total:</b>	<b>642,000.00</b>	<b>174,456.52</b>

## YEAR 2018

ACTIVITIES	Budget/AED	Budget/US Dollars
Prelaunch marketing and advertising	1,178,394.40	320,215.87
Public relations and communications campaign	95,846.47	26,045.24
SWBC brand identity unveiling and awareness campaign	429,097.75	116,602.65
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,703,339</b>	<b>462,864</b>

## YEAR 2019

ACTIVITIES	Budget/AED	Budget/US Dollars
<b>PARTICIPATIONS</b>		
Participation in the University of Sharjah «We All Read» Event	98,400	26,739
Participation in the London Book Fair	401,986	109,235
Participation in the Turin International Book Fair	88,823	24,137
Participation in the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (Silent Book Exhibition)	257,000	69,837
Participation in the Moscow International Book Fair	143,833	39,085
Participation in the Frankfurt International Book Fair	54,929	14,926
Celebrating the International Youth Day	2,339	636
Bibliotherapy workshop with Sharjah Police	94,804	25,762
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,142,114</b>	<b>310,357</b>
<b>EVENTS</b>		
The Sharjah Children's Reading Festival (11th ed.)	5,000,000	1,358,695.652
Sharjah World Book Capital Opening Ceremony	20,073,905	5,454,865
IFLA's 4th Arab Regional Conference	350,000	95,108.69565
Celebrating World Labour Day	12,500	3,397
'Kan Ya ma Kan' Book Donation Campaign	260,000	70,652
The Emirati Book Fair (1st ed.)	150,000	40,760.86957

ACTIVITIES	Budget/AED	Budget/US Dollars
<b>EVENTS - CONTINUATION</b>		
Etisalat Award Publishers Workshop	300,000	81,522
Evolution of Arabic Calligraphy Exhibition	20,518	5,576
Sharjah Beach Library	738,115	200,575
The Silk Road Book Exhibition	189,000	51,359
Sharjah International Narrator Festival	1,300,000	353,261
Sharjah International Film Festival for Youth and Children	2,000,000	543,478
The Sharjah International Book Fair (38th ed)	19,161,000	5,206,793.478
Librarian Conference	450,000	1,222,826.087
Focal Point Art Book Fair (2nd ed)	147,200	40,000
Superhero's Book Festival	80,000	21,739
Sharjah Islamic Arts Festival	9,050,000	2,459,239
Sharjah Desert Theatre Festival	4,000,000	1,086,957
<b>Total:</b>	<b>63,282,238</b>	<b>17,196,260</b>
<b>SPONSORSHIP</b>		
Exhibitor participation at the IPA Regional Seminar in Nairobi, Kenya	12,000	3,261
Sponsorship of Omar Victor's "Read. Write. Create Africa" Exhibition at the Xposure International Photography Festival	23,973	6,514
Book Talks in collaboration with Al Rawi	1,000,000	271,739
Sponsorship of "PublisHER" Sharjah	10,000	2,717
Cooks and Books in collaboration with Al Rawi	1,000,000	271,739
Celebrating the UAE National Day	63,658	17,298
Participation at the Sharjah Entrepreneurship Festival by Sheraa	99,750	27,106
Sponsoring the "Book Piracy on Digital Platforms" session in the 8th Regional Conference on Combating Intellectual Property Crime in the MENA Region	50,000	13,587
Sponsoring the "Publishing Day" at the Emirates Literature Festival	100,500	27,310
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2,359,881</b>	<b>641,272</b>
Marketing and advertising (2019)	6,503,004	1,767,121
Sharjah Beach Library	2,600,082	706,544
Hosting opening ceremony international guests and media including transportation and accommodation	1,813,410	492,774
Public relations and communications (2019)	2,896,300	787,038
SWBC website development	187,768	51,024
<b>Total:</b>	<b>14,000,564</b>	<b>3,804,501</b>
<b>PUBLICATIONS</b>		
SWBC Anthology Book	213,000	57,880
1001 Nights: The Last Chapter	495,206	134,567
<b>Total:</b>	<b>708,206</b>	<b>192,447</b>
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>81,493,003</b>	<b>22,144,838</b>

## YEAR 2020

ACTIVITIES	Budget/AED	Budget/US Dollars
<b>PARTICIPATIONS</b>		
Preparation for Bologna Book Fair	1,252	340
Preparation for London Book Fair	442,000	120,109
Preparation for Sharjah Children Reading Festival	20,000	5,435
Participation at the International Government Communication Forum (9TH ed.)	254,287	69,100
<b>Total:</b>	<b>717,539</b>	<b>194,983</b>
<b>EVENTS</b>		
SWBC Book Friendly School Campaign	2,373,000	644,837
Read the Movie event	279,445	75,936
Read the Play event	55,000	14,946
SWBC Virtual Closing Ceremony Production and Live Streaming	600,000	163,043
#QuarantineReads Book Hampers Initiative	276,360	75,098
Intellectual Property Digital Campaign (in collaboration with EIPA)	248,343	67,485
Closing ceremony monument countdown projection	127,710	34,704
The Used Book Fair (7th ed.)	147,287	40,024
Celebrating the International Children's Book Day	224,175	60,917
Celebrating the International Poetry Day	20,195	5,488
Celebrating World Braille Day	5,200	1,413
Sharjah Arabic Poetry Festival	1,400,000	380,435
Sharjah Folklore Poetry Festival	2,400,000	652,174
Sharjah Light Festival	19,000,000	5,163,043
"Read Dream Create" Reading Campaign Launch	590,000	160,326
Sharjah Theatre Days	6,939,000	1,885,598
<b>Total:</b>	<b>34,685,715</b>	<b>9,425,466</b>

ACTIVITIES	Budget/AED	Budget/US Dollars
<b>SPONSORSHIP</b>		
Sponsorship of "Access Sharjah" (in collaboration with Sheraa)	700,000	190,217
Sponsorship of the Hans Christian Andersen Exhibition (in collaboration with UAEBBY)	302,751	82,269
Sponsorship of Finyal's "1001 Nights" Arabic fiction podcast	500,000	135,870
Sponsorship of Finyal's "Juha" Arabic fiction podcasts	500,000	135,870
Sponsorship of the Swahili Literary Festival	36,820	10,005
Creative Writing Retreat (in collaboration with 1001 titles)	326,802	88,805
Free audiobook subscription campaign with Kitab Sawti	100,000	27,174
Sponsorship of the Translation Workshop (in collaboration with the British Council)	51,223	13,919
Sponsorship of Makadara Library Plans	1,778,539	482,643
<b>Total:</b>	<b>4,296,135</b>	<b>1,166,772</b>
Public relations and communications (2020)	2,415,000	656,250
Marketing and advertising (2020)	4,322,990	1,174,726
<b>Total:</b>	<b>6,737,990</b>	<b>1,830,976</b>
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>46,437,379</b>	<b>12,618,197</b>

<b>Grand Total: Budget 2017</b>	<b>642,000</b>	<b>174,457</b>
<b>Grand Total: Budget 2018</b>	<b>1,703,339</b>	<b>462,864</b>
<b>Grand Total: Budget 2019</b>	<b>81,493,003</b>	<b>22,144,838</b>
<b>Grand Total: Budget 2020</b>	<b>46,437,379</b>	<b>12,618,197</b>
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>130,275,721</b>	<b>35,400,355</b>



# CONCLUSION

We are thrilled to have had the opportunity to work together and alongside UNESCO in our unique journey as World Book Capital 2019. Our designation and ambitious programming have made way for us to build a robust foundation which will continue to bring about an extraordinary influence around books and reading in the city. From the unveiling of The Scroll monument in April 2019 to the establishment of the magnificent House of Wisdom in April 2020, we have pursued a fulfilling and insightful journey with our partners, audience, and their audiences.

Sharjah World Book Capital 2019 was set out to adhere to its six pillars aimed at, unifying communities, fostering knowledge, honouring heritage, empowering children and youth, raising awareness to boost community support and developing publishing industries. We are proudly looking back at our achievements thus far and looking forward to, as successfully, venturing in our future endeavours including upcoming editions of the Sharjah International Book Fair, Sharjah International Narrator Festival, Sharjah Islamic Arts Festival, Silent Book Exhibition at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair and the Sharjah Folklore Poetry Festival.

The end of our designation came at a challenging time amid the heightened fear caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, the situation brought about a greater sense of appreciation to the work we have done and the positive responses we have received from industry partners, our audience, and the media. We were able to connect more deeply with our goals and objectives as we creatively rationalised by providing free access to e-books, free audiobooks and more, proving our and the literary and educational industry's diligence and resilience. We will continue to nourish and, highlight our involvement and efforts in the literary scene across the region and internationally.

Lastly, we would like to thank our advisory committee and all those involved and a special thank you to UNESCO World Book Capital for advising us and working alongside us throughout the year.



# APPENDIX



## **A: ORGANISATION**

### **B: OUR BRAND IDENTITY**

BA SWBC BRAND IDENTITY AND IMAGES

BB MERCHANDISE LIST AND IMAGES

### **C: THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

### **D: ACTIVITIES**

DA INAUGURATION WEEK CULTURAL PROGRAM

DB SCROLL MONUMENT DETAILS

DC EVENTS ROADMAP

DD COLLABORATION AND PARTNERS LIST

# APPENDIX A: THE ORGANISATION

## The Bid Committee

Emirates Publishers Association

Knowledge without Borders

Sharjah Book Authority

UAE Board on Books for Young People

Emirates Writers Union

## The Sharjah World Book Capital Office

Bodour Al Qasimi – Head of SWBC Office

Amani Al Ali – SWBC Office Director

Marwa Al Aqroubi – Project Manager

Ahmed Al Suwaidi – Corporate Communications Manager

Iman Ellouh - Sr. Executive Assistant

Amira Bin Faris – Sr. Special Projects Executive

Mariam Al Kamali – Sr. Partnerships Executive

Kinana Abdul Al – Public Relations and Media Executive

Hiba Mirza – Sr. Creative Content Executive

Ali Al Shemmari – Government Relations Executive

Mohamad Al Attar- Sr. International Media Relations Executive

Haikel Hamouda – Strategic Planner

## The Advisory Committee

Sharjah Executive Council (SEC)

Supreme Council for Family Affairs (SCFA)

Sharjah Media Council (SMC)

Department of Culture (DoC)

Department of Government Relations (DGR)

Department of Statistics and Community Development (DSCD)

Sharjah Book Authority (SBA)

Sharjah Investment and Development Authority (SHUROOQ)

Sharjah Commerce & Tourism Development Authority

Sharjah Media Corporation (SMC)

Sharjah Art Foundation (SAF)

Rubu' Qarn Foundation for Creating Leaders and Innovators

NAMA Women Advancement Establishment

Sharjah Government Media Bureau (SGMB)

Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services (SCHS)

Sharjah Institute for Heritage

Emirates Writers Union (SWU)

Emirates Publishers Association (EPA)

The UAE Board on Books for Young People (UAEBBY)

# APPENDIX B: OUR BRAND IDENTITY



Click to watch the manifesto video

<https://www.sharjahwbc.com/en/our-manifesto.aspx>



Download our media kit

<https://www.sharjahwbc.com/en/media-kit.aspx>



## SWBC Merchandise

- Informative brochures – 14,500pcs
- Pencils – 8,700
- Notebook – 13,500
- USBs – 13,000
- Pins – 3,400
- Bookmarks – 13,250
- Tote bags – 13,500pcs



## Book Friendly School Merchandise

- Backpack – 10,000pcs
- Colouring Book Notebook – 10,000pcs
- Colouring Pencils – 10,000pcs
- Stickers – 10,000pcs
- Bookmarks – 10,000pcs
- Gift Box – 50pcs



## Sharjah Beach Library Merchandise

- PVC bags – 2,150pcs
- Towels – 1,480pcs
- Bookmarks – 3,000pcs
- Beach balls – 1,000pcs
- Umbrellas – 1,000pcs

# APPENDIX C: THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

SWBC has been featured in the following media outlets:			
Dailymail	ArabianBusiness.com	Publishers Weekly	البيان
Publishing Perspectives	Al Arabiya	Arab News	بوابة العين الإخبارية
Book Brunch	Africanews En	Hotelier ME	اليوم السابع
Euronews	Harper's Bazaar Arabia	Design Milk	صدى البلد
AFP	Emirates 7/24	The Independent	الخليج
The National	Asharq Al-awsat En	Robb Report	سيدتي
Gulf News	Esquire ME	News18	العرب (صفحة)
Gulf Today	Alkhaleej Today	Dubai Week	الإمارات اليوم
The Hindu	My Modern Met	SME10X	بوابة الأهرام
What's On	MEConstructionNews.com	Sharjah24	الإتحاد
Entrepreneur	The Jerusalem Post	MBC	ميدل إيست أونلاين
WAM En	Spear's WMS	DMC News	مجلة هي
Economic Times	Insite Ooh	24.ae	قناة الغد
ZAWYA	Art Critique	Time Out Dubai	الإمارات نيوز
Khaleej Times	Republic World	Egypt Today	العربية نت
Construction Week Online (HoW)	The Bookseller		

# APPENDIX D: ACTIVITIES

## DA: CULTURAL PROGRAM FOR INTERNATIONAL GUESTS

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21 APRIL 2019

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Arrival of guests at the hotel, dinner and resting time

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22 APRIL 2019

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### 10am: visit of the Cultural Palace of Sharjah

More a central roundabout than a typical city square, Cultural Square features a 15-metre-high sculpture of the Holy Qur'an as its centerpiece. Designed by Spanish sculptor Carlos Marinas Rubias, it represents the spiritual heart of the city.

It is encircled by a number of stately buildings built in traditional Islamic style, including the Ruler's Office, the Ahmad Bin Hanbal Mosque and the Cultural Palace, which is used for concerts and events.

### 12pm: immersion at the Heart of Sharjah

In every city, there is a place that sets its heartbeat and defines the pulse of the city, reflecting its history, echoing its ethos and mirroring its spirit. That's what Heart of Sharjah is. A project interwoven into the very history and fabric of Sharjah.

Heart of Sharjah is the largest historical preservation and restoration project in the region. Planned over a 15 year period, to be completed by 2025, it seeks to revitalize the heritage district as a vibrant cultural destination by unraveling a glorious past - restoring historical buildings, constructing new structures following traditional Sharjah architecture and transforming them into hotels, restaurants, cafes, art galleries and markets, where the current generations and the future generations can experience Sharjah's cultural and social fabric.

### 1pm: lunch break at Fen Café

### 3pm: Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization or an exhibition at Sharjah Museums

The first Sharjah Islamic Museum opened its doors in the Heritage Area in 1996. Its extensive collections were moved to the impressive building of the traditional Souq Al Majarra to be reinterpreted and redisplayed. The new Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization was opened on June 6, 2008.

The Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization holds thousands of rare and important Islamic artifacts. Here; you can admire the timeless achievements of Islamic civilization and its universality, learn about aspects of Islamic faith, science, discoveries and culture, and cherish the beauty of Islamic art.

### 5pm: unwind at Noor Island with a reading relaxation break at the Literature Pavilion

Where arts and culture meet natural beauty. Every square inch of Al Noor Island has been conceptualized and built to open your mind to a myriad of expressions and experiences. A microcosm of modern vision and Arabic inspirations, the Island offers the best mix of recreation, art, education and entertainment for the entire family. The perfect location to unwind and feel Sharjah.

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23 APRIL 2019

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### 10am: visit of the Blue Souq

The Souk al-Markazi (Central Market), popularly known as the Blue Souk, is the main shopping hub and one of the most impressive landmarks of Sharjah. The building has been designed by the British architects Michael Lyle & Partners, based on the ideas and guidance of the Ruler of Sharjah, HH Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Muhammed Al Qasimi, and was completed in 1978. The architecture captures the character of a traditional bazaar on a grand scale. Located on the shore of the Khalid Lagoon, it is most beautiful at sunset, seen across the water.

### 11am: visit of Al Qasba

A buzzing spot for casual walk and dining. Crossed by pedestrian bridges, this car-free canal-side complex is packed with cafés, restaurants and shops.

### 11:30m: visit of the Barjeel Foundation and Maraya Art Center

Barjeel Art Foundation is an independent, United Arab Emirates-based initiative established to manage, preserve and exhibit the personal art collection of Sultan Sooud Al Qassemi.

Maraya Art Centre is a non-profit creative organisation located in Sharjah, U.A.E. Maraya Art Centre offers innovative programmes through its multifaceted initiatives, and public outreach activities including workshops, lectures, talks and other art related events.

### 1pm: Emirati lunch at Al Fanar Majaz

### 6pm: the launch of the SWBC 2019 Monument at Sharjah University City

### 8:30pm: kick-off of the official ceremony at Al Majaz Amphitheatre

24 APRIL 2019

**10:30am – 3pm: visit of the Sharjah Art Biennale 14 (special tour with SAF)**

Open from 7 March – 10 June 2019, Sharjah Biennial 14 (SB14) will showcase three unique exhibitions, curated by Zoe Butt, Omar Kholeif and Claire Tancons, that explore the possibilities and purpose of producing art when news is fed by a monopoly of sources, history is increasingly fictionalised, when ideas of ‘society’ are invariably displaced and when borders and beliefs are dictated by cultural, social and political systems.”

**4:30pm: visit of Mleiha archeological center, Sunset Lounge experience (including dune bashing, sunset, dinner and stargazing)**

Venture deep into the deserts of Sharjah and uncover the secrets of the region’s ancient Bedouin culture through intriguing information, exhilarating recreational activities and breath-taking natural landscapes. Discover something unique every time with our ongoing excavation programme, which ensures there’s always a new treasure waiting to be unearthed.

This new visitor attraction in the Emirate of Sharjah blends history, nature and culture with exceptional quality and warm hospitality to create a unique leisure experience in a spectacular natural setting.

Mleiha is a story that is still being told so come and discover the undiscovered.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES ALSO AVAILABLE:**

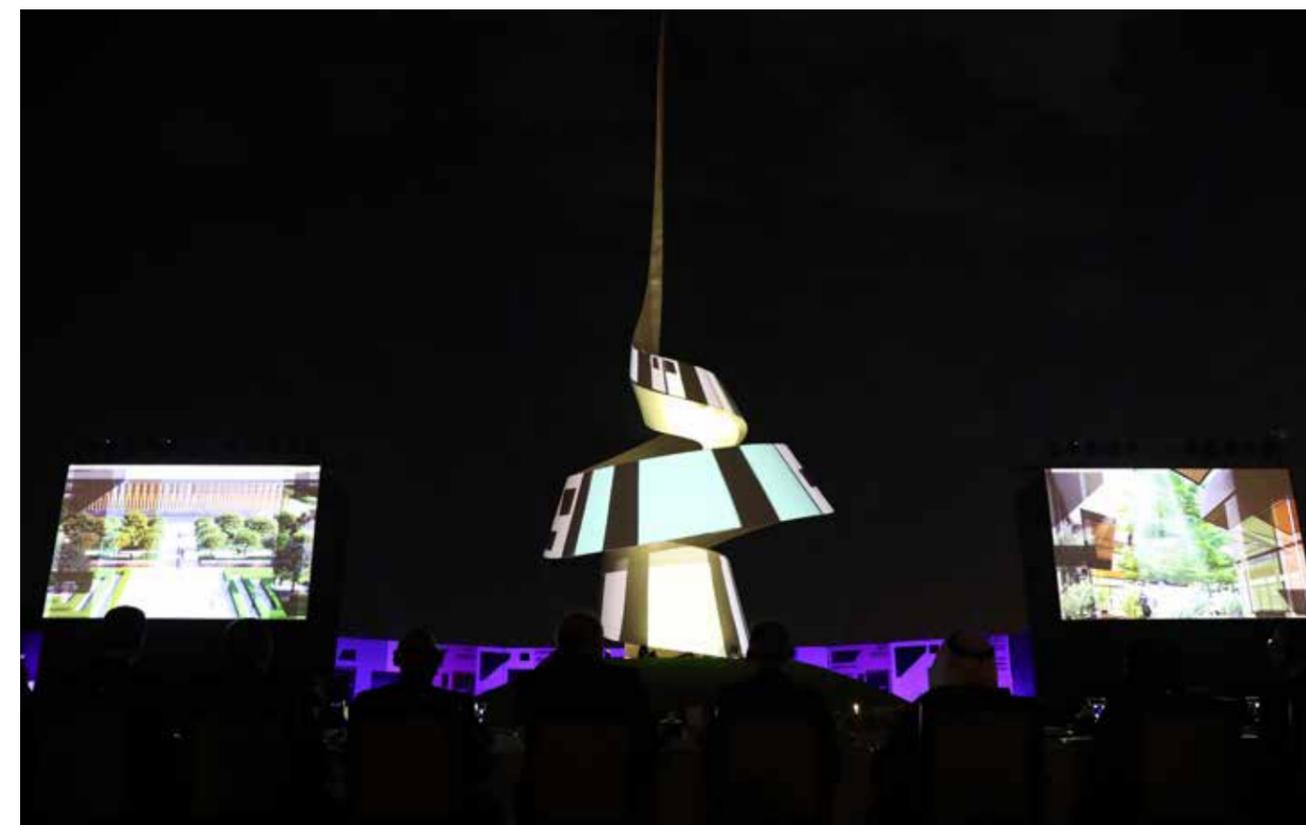
17 - 27 April	Sharjah Children’s Reading Festival	Expo Sharjah
21 - 27 April	Arab Deaf Week	Sharjah Museum
23 April	The Launch of the Sharjah World Book Capital Monument 2019	University City, Sharjah
	The Opening Ceremony of Sharjah World Book Capital 2019	Al Majaz Theatre, Sharjah
7 March - 10 June 2019	Sharjah Biennial 14 Leaving the Echo Chamber	Sharjah Art Foundation
24 - 30 April	Abu Dhabi International Book Fair	Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, Abu Dhabi
25 - 26 April	IFLA Conference	Expo Sharjah
29 April	The 13th Scientific Research Forum	University of Sharjah

**DB: THE SCROLL MONUMENT**

The Scroll Monument is a commemoration of Sharjah’s landmark cultural achievement as the first city in the Gulf region and third city in the Arab world to be given the World Book Capital title by UNESCO. The sculpture is inspired by an ancient scroll design that represents the lasting power of books and how reading unites people. Shaped like a torch, the monument highlights Sharjah’s ongoing efforts aimed at fostering reading and stressing the important role of books in intellectuality and enlightenment.

It was developed by the Sharjah Investment and Development Authority (Shurooq) and commissioned by UK-based artist, Gerry Judah upon receiving news of the winning of the WBC bid. It is 36.5 metres, made of 72 tonnes of steel, and 240 tonnes of concrete foundation underneath a 4-metre base.

The monument is located by the House of Wisdom library which was also built in celebration of Sharjah World Book Capital.



DC: EVENTS ROADMAP

2019

**23 APR** | Sharjah World Book Capital Opening Ceremony

**Al Majaz Amphitheatre**

A magical night is planned to celebrate the launch of the Sharjah World Book Capital 2019. The ceremony will begin with a few inspiring speeches, a ceremonial trophy bestowing from Athens World Book Capital 2018 to Sharjah World Book Capital 2019, and ends with the most awaited theatre performance '1001 Nights: The Last Chapter'.





**25 APR** | IFLA's 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference

**Expo Center - Sharjah**

IFLA's 4th Arab Regional Conference titled «Information Technologies and Digital Knowledge Impact on Arab Institutions and Work Environment» will discuss information technologies and digital knowledge in the context of its Global Vision Report 2018. Discussions will include the projections on the information systems and work environment in the Arab region, specifically on libraries and audience access and classification of information.




**17-27 APR** | Sharjah Children's Reading Festival

**Expo Center - Sharjah**

Sharjah Children's Reading Festival is a cultural event that attracts children and adults alike in a family-friendly atmosphere. The festival encourages learning and self-education from a young age, with the aims of raising a generation who will contribute to the development of their society. The festival hosts over 134 exhibitors specialised in children's literature; attracts more than 306,000 visitors; and entertains them with 2600 educational and fun-filled activities fit for all ages.




**24-30 APR** | Silent Book Exhibition at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair

**Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, Abu Dhabi**

The fourth edition of the Silent Book Exhibition will be held at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair. This initiative is part of UAEBBY's efforts to highlight the benefits of silent books — that is stories with no words but expressive and elaborate artwork — which allow children to understand, learn and enjoy stories regardless of their language and education level. These books were originally created to help children immigrants and refugees adapt and heal through difficult times.




**01 MAY** | Celebrating World Labour Day

**Sharjah Municipality Labour Camp**

To celebrate World Labour Day, a series of workshops have been specially designed for workers across labour accommodations in Sharjah. The activities planned aim to instil a love of reading among workers, promote reading as a healthy hobby that can educate, empower and relax them on during breaks and off time.




**26-28 MAY** | The Emirati Book Fair (EBF)

**Sharjah Book Authority (SBA)**

The Emirati Book Fair (EBF) has been launched by the Sharjah Book Authority (SBA) in collaboration with the Emirates Writers Union (EWU). It is a literary event geared towards celebrating the works and accomplishments of Emirati writers and intellectuals, shedding light on emerging literary talents in the UAE, and offering an exclusive national cultural platform to honour Emirati writers.

This is the first edition of the event and will run from 26th to 28th of May. The event will showcase the latest homegrown publications brought in by 25 Emirati publishers created by a stellar cast of Emirati authors. The event is designed for industry professionals and the general public with an exciting line up of panel discussions and books exhibitions set for the event.




**13-31 MAY** | 'Kan Ya ma Kan' Book Donation Campaign

**Al Majaz Amphitheatre**

The 'Kan Yama Kan' initiative was launched as a means of actualising UAEBBY's goals to bring children and books together and provide support for underprivileged children around the world. Quality children's books are collected through book donation campaigns set up throughout the UAE; they are then redistributed to partners who deliver them to children living in areas that struggle to gain access to books and education as a result of social or natural disasters, unrest, and wars. These books are to serve as a source of knowledge, entertainment, and psychological support.




**13-15 JUNE** | Etisalat Award Publishers Workshop

**Al Majaz Amphitheatre**

Etisalat Award Publishers Workshop Etisalat Award, The UAE Board on Books for Young People The workshop known as 'Warsha' is a trailblazing initiative by the Etisalat Award for Arabic Children's Literature that aims to support and inspire a new generation of writers, illustrators, publishers, and app developers who are passionate about creating Arabic books and apps for children and young adults.

This innovative programme will offer workshops in illustration, writing, and publishing with the aim of building the capacities of young individuals in the creation of books that are both rooted in local Arabic culture and that soar to meet international standards.

The workshops will be presented in the UAE and abroad by internationally acclaimed trainers and specialists in the fields of Children's and Young Adult literature.




DC: EVENTS ROADMAP

**05-31** | Sharjah Beach Library  
AUG - MAR



The Sharjah Beach Library initiative aims to make books easily accessible and promotes reading as a fun past time. With a wide collection in varied languages and genres available, the Sharjah Beach Library can be enjoyed by all beach visitors.

**19-22** | XPOSURE International Photography Festival  
SEP



Xposure International Photography Festival is combines a broad range of photography activities with a consumer product trade show. Supported by internationally acclaimed professionals and industry experts, Xposure offers many exciting opportunities to learn new skills and network with leading professionals and enthusiasts, along with the opportunity to see, handle and try the latest photographic products.

**26-15** | Evolution of Arabic Calligraphy Exhibition  
JUL - AUG

**Sharjah Calligraphy Museum**



Go on an exploratory, creative, and authentic journey in order to trace the evolution of Arabic fonts. This exhibition includes beautiful paintings with written texts, creative letters and forms made by the best calligraphers over the years.

The museum also offers preserved works that showcase the accuracy and splendour of Arabic calligraphy, done by local artists and calligraphers, and will be open to visitors throughout the year.

**18-19** | Exhibition: The Silk Road  
AUG - OCT

**Maraya Art Centre – Al Qasba**



In the past, the Silk Road was an ancient road network linking the Eastern and Western countries together. This road has played a fundamental role in cultural interaction between the regions of the world for centuries.

The Silk Road exhibition, which portrays a modern «silk road» linking East and West together, will be held. Young readers who travel far or from far can access this exhibition and the stories within. The collection includes 100 books that mirror China's charming beauty and ancient civilisation.

**24-26** | Sharjah International Narrator Forum  
SEP



Sharjah International Storytelling Festival, Al Rawi, was launched in Sharjah in 2001 to celebrate the oral tradition recounted by narrators and informants, to honour the elderly and leverage their rich heritage and experience in writing history, and to document and preserve the oral heritage of the UAE community. In 2015, the forum turned international, opening windows to the world of international narrators of heritage and popular cultures.

**13-18** | Sharjah International Film Festival for Youth and Children  
OCT

**Al Jawaher Reception and Convention Centre**



This festival plays an essential role in bringing international films and new media content for children and youth in the region. It exposes them to world cultures and promotes peace, tolerance and global understanding of how people from different cultures, religions and backgrounds live together. During the festival children will enjoy different workshops, Q&A and discussion panels with the filmmakers, and film screenings of movies made by children and teenagers.

**11-01** | Book Talks  
OCT - APR

**Al Rawi Restaurant & Café, Sharjah**



Al Rawi is brewing up an exciting gathering for bookworms. The Book Talks meeting will feature a special author once a month. Join us for book signings, excerpt readings, and Q&A sessions to discover more about some of the most famous authors and the stories you love.

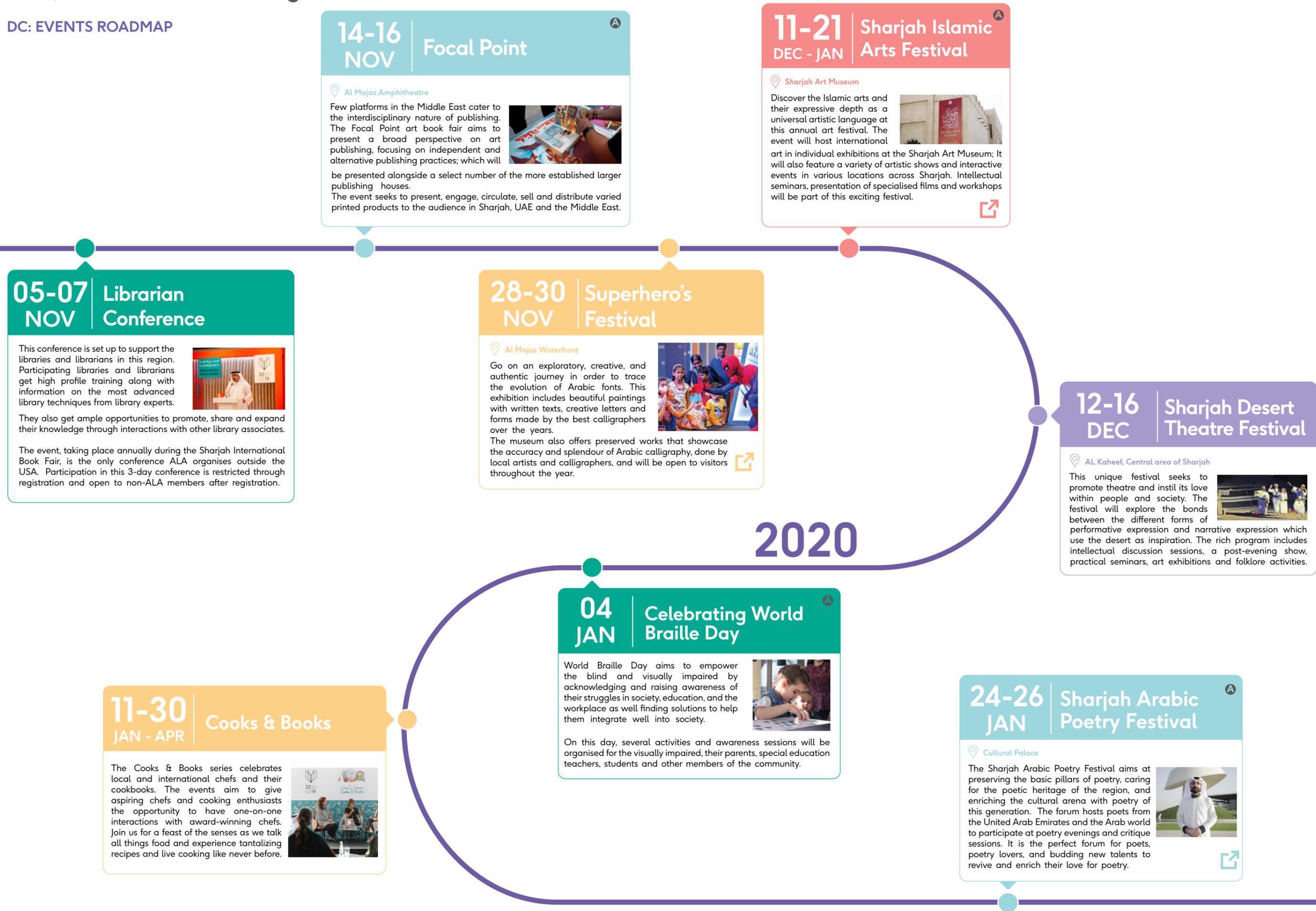
**30 OCT-09 NOV** | Sharjah International Book Fair



Sharjah International Book Fair (SIBF) is the world's third largest book fair in the world and is an 11-day annual event that celebrates knowledge, promotes reading and brings book lovers closer to famous Arab and international authors.

SIBF's comprehensive cultural programme meets the needs of students, researchers and academics, publishers, literary agents, leading intellectuals, and librarians. The fair also serves as a vibrant hub of literary events for children and families, and showcases talented artists, filmmakers, poets and playwrights on its well-established platforms.

DC: EVENTS ROADMAP



### 05-07 NOV Librarian Conference

This conference is set up to support the libraries and librarians in this region. Participating libraries and librarians get high profile training along with information on the most advanced library techniques from library experts.



They also get ample opportunities to promote, share and expand their knowledge through interactions with other library associates.

The event, taking place annually during the Sharjah International Book Fair, is the only conference ALA organises outside the USA. Participation in this 3-day conference is restricted through registration and open to non-ALA members after registration.

### 14-16 NOV Focal Point

**Al Majaz Amphitheatre**

Few platforms in the Middle East cater to the interdisciplinary nature of publishing. The Focal Point art book fair aims to present a broad perspective on art publishing, focusing on independent and alternative publishing practices; which will be presented alongside a select number of the more established larger publishing houses. The event seeks to present, engage, circulate, sell and distribute varied printed products to the audience in Sharjah, UAE and the Middle East.



### 28-30 NOV Superhero's Festival

**Al Majaz Waterfront**

Go on an exploratory, creative, and authentic journey in order to trace the evolution of Arabic fonts. This exhibition includes beautiful paintings with written texts, creative letters and forms made by the best calligraphers over the years. The museum also offers preserved works that showcase the accuracy and splendour of Arabic calligraphy, done by local artists and calligraphers, and will be open to visitors throughout the year.



### 11-21 DEC - JAN Sharjah Islamic Arts Festival

**Sharjah Art Museum**

Discover the Islamic arts and their expressive depth as a universal artistic language at this annual art festival. The event will host international art in individual exhibitions at the Sharjah Art Museum; It will also feature a variety of artistic shows and interactive events in various locations across Sharjah. Intellectual seminars, presentation of specialised films and workshops will be part of this exciting festival.



### 12-16 DEC Sharjah Desert Theatre Festival

**AL Kaheef, Central area of Sharjah**

This unique festival seeks to promote theatre and instil its love within people and society. The festival will explore the bonds between the different forms of performative expression and narrative expression which use the desert as inspiration. The rich program includes intellectual discussion sessions, a post-evening show, practical seminars, art exhibitions and folklore activities.



### 11-30 JAN - APR Cooks & Books

The Cooks & Books series celebrates local and international chefs and their cookbooks. The events aim to give aspiring chefs and cooking enthusiasts the opportunity to have one-on-one interactions with award-winning chefs. Join us for a feast of the senses as we talk all things food and experience tantalizing recipes and live cooking like never before.



### 04 JAN Celebrating World Braille Day

World Braille Day aims to empower the blind and visually impaired by acknowledging and raising awareness of their struggles in society, education, and the workplace as well finding solutions to help them integrate well into society.

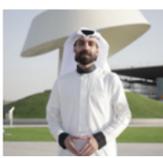


On this day, several activities and awareness sessions will be organised for the visually impaired, their parents, special education teachers, students and other members of the community.

### 24-26 JAN Sharjah Arabic Poetry Festival

**Cultural Palace**

The Sharjah Arabic Poetry Festival aims at preserving the basic pillars of poetry, caring for the poetic heritage of the region, and enriching the cultural arena with poetry of this generation. The forum hosts poets from the United Arab Emirates and the Arab world to participate at poetry evenings and critique sessions. It is the perfect forum for poets, poetry lovers, and budding new talents to revive and enrich their love for poetry.



DC: EVENTS ROADMAP

**05-15 FEB** | Sharjah Light Festival **A**

Sharjah

The light festival is one of Sharjah's most anticipated events, attracting thousands of visitors from across the UAE and abroad. It is a beautiful illustration of the creative arts, Islamic history and ancient heritage of Sharjah through elaborate light shows; the shows will be hosted by the most famous architectural landmarks in Sharjah for 10 days and the theme of the tenth edition will focus on the world of books and knowledge.



**26-29 FEB** | The Seventh Used Book Fair **A**

Al Nakheel Park, Khalid Lagoon Corniche

The Sharjah Used Book Fair has become one of the most important events that combines culture, volunteerism and charitable work. The fair aims to instil the love of reading in people with books ranging from AED2 to AED20 only. The proceeds of all sales will be donated to support the provision of world-class programmes and services for people of determination. In addition, adults and children can enjoy a number of cultural, entertaining and artistic activities organised alongside the event.



**02-07 FEB** | Sharjah Folklore Poetry Festival **A**

This festival is one of the largest Arab forums specialising in folklore poetry. It showcases the role of popular poetry in the Emirati society and explores the meanings and connotations contained therein. In addition, it aims at documenting and embodying the Emirati, Gulf and Arab poetry arena with its types, genres, figures and features. The festival celebrates the creativity of oral literature and includes a variety of activities to promote poetry consciousness. It is a must attend event for poets and poetry lovers alike.



**21 FEB** | Celebrating International Mother Language Day **A**

Al Qasba

International Mother Language Day celebrates the linguistic and cultural diversity of multilingualism and the mother tongue. This year, Sharjah is bringing together adults and children from all languages to Al Qasba to enjoy a day of reading, education, activities and celebration of all languages including Arabic, English, Urdu, Filipino, French, and more.



**01-30 MAR - MAY** | Hans Christian Andersen Exhibition **A**

Sharjah Art Museum

Hans Christian Andersen (1805-1875), a Danish writer and poet, is one of the most famous writers in the field of fairy tales. His stories have been widely recognised throughout the world after being translated into several languages, including Arabic. The most famous fairy tales are: Hop-o-My-Thumb, The Little Match Girl, The Steadfast Tin Soldier, The Snow Queen, The Little Mermaid, and The Ugly Duckling. Many of which has become cartoon series and movies. This Exhibition showcases Andersen's life and work through many of his collections. It will highlight the significant role he played in the field of writing and how excelled to attain a prominent position in the world. The exhibition will also include workshops for children and adults.



**18-26 MAR** | Sharjah Theatre Days **A**

Cultural Palace, Sharjah Institute of Theatrical Arts

Sharjah Theatre Days is an annual cultural event involving theatre groups from the United Arab Emirates. The event hosts major thinkers, authors, and leading actors from around the world to participate in performances, seminars, meetings and open dialogues to provide an interactive environment that enriches the Emirati theatre community. The festival also includes several honours and awards for pioneers of the field including the Sharjah Award for Arab Creativity.



**05 MAR** | "Read Dream Create" Reading Campaign Launch **A**

The 'Read Dream Create' campaign encourages interaction between children and books by building their capacity in reading, writing, innovation, and creativity through children's stories. The campaign also aims to help better understand the needs of the Arab child in order to identify critical issues and topics that should be addressed in Arabic children's literature. The campaign's success has encouraged all segments of society to participate and volunteer in literacy activities planned.



**02 APR** | Celebrating International Children's Book Day **A**

In celebration of the International Children's Book Day, created book hampers to keep children's minds at ease and well entertained while spending all their time at home. 250 hampers were produced and each included games, stickers, and eight books. This was one of many ways the SWBC tried to encourage families to reach out for reading times with their children during these tough times and it worked; the hampers received online traction through social media and SWBC was contacted by many parents wanting boxes for their children.



**13-22 APR** | Closing Ceremony **A**

Bodour Al Qasimi, Head of the SWBC Advisory Committee, gave a heart-warming speech that not only commemorated a year full of SWBC achievements, but also reminded us all that now more than ever through these tough times, that the power of books will unite us and make us stronger. The speech ended with a congratulatory message to Kuala Lumpur and the packing of the WBC trophy, officially marking the handing over.



**26 MAR** | International Government Communication Forum **A**

The International Government Communication Forum is the first-of-its-kind platform in the region that brings together global government communication experts to explore best practices in the field. Since its inauguration, the forum has redefined the communication landscape in the Arab world and internationally with its pioneering discussions and recommendations that have tangibly impacted communication policies at the regional and international levels.



## DD: COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP LIST

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### International Organisations

UNESCO  
International Publishers Association  
The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)  
American Library Association  
British Council  
Kuala Lumpur World Book Capital

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### Federal & Government Organisations

The Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development  
The Ministry of Youth Affairs  
Emirates Postal Service  
Sharjah Road and Transport Authority  
UAE Central Bank  
Sharjah Electricity and Water Authority  
Sharjah Police  
Sharjah Municipality  
Sharjah Women's Sports  
Sajaya Young Ladies of Sharjah  
Sharjah Girl Guides

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### Private Organisations

Al Majaz Amphitheatre  
Dubai Opera  
Vox Cinemas  
Zero 6 Mall  
Cinema City  
Kitab Sawti  
Finyal Media  
Nasher News  
Bee'ah Environmental Management  
Saddle Cafe  
Sharjah Ladies Club  
NOT a SPACE Co-working Cafe

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### Booksellers and Publishers

Kinokuniya  
Al Rawi Bookstore and Cafe  
DC Books  
Kalimat Group  
Sail Publishing

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### Non-profit / Charitable Organisations

Red Crescent  
Kalimat Foundation  
Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services (SCHS)



