NOVEMBER 11, 2025

AKU GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT PLAN
2025-2028

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST & VICE PRESIDENT ACADEMIC
AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY
Contact office: Global Engagement Office

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose & Alignment. Translate AKU ONWARDS 2024–2028 into a focused partnership agenda that advances IQRA values (Impact, Quality, Relevance, Access), strengthens academic excellence and reputation, and delivers measurable benefits to communities across AKU geographies. Prioritize SDG-linked collaborations—especially SDG 3 (Health), SDG 4 (Education), SDG 5 (Gender), and SDG 13 (Climate).

Goal. Amplify AKU's impact in health, education, environment/planetary health, data science/AI, liberal arts and public policy by building selective, objective-driven partnerships with AKDN agencies, universities, governments, multilaterals, industry, and civil society—while safeguarding autonomy, academic freedom, and research security.

Targets (to 2028).
- Double institutional MOUs from 8 to 16.
- Add ≥2 new partners in priority regions.
- Establish balanced portfolios in Asia and the Middle East alongside South–South collaborations in AKDN priority regions.[1]
- Establish a steering committee for each active institutional MOU.
- Track activities for each institutional MOU to ensure depth of engagement

What We Will Prioritize.
- Selective university alliances with reciprocity across education, research, mobility, capacity building, and innovation/commercialization.
- Regional partnerships guided by an International Advisory Council on Regional Partnerships (IACRP) in China, South/Southeast/Central Asia, and the Middle East.
- AKDN-integrated impact platforms with Aga Khan Health Services, Aga Khan Schools, and related agencies.
- Policy and industry pathways to move evidence into adoption at scale.
- Risk integrity: due diligence on finance, human resources, regulatory compliance, research security, IP/data, sanctions and safeguarding.

Partnership Activities.
- Academic & institutional strengthening: co-designed curricula, accreditation, quality teaching & learning, faculty development.
- Research growth: joint grants, interdisciplinary projects of regional relevance, co-authorship.
- Mobility: scaled student experiential learning; faculty and staff exchanges.
- Community impact: programmes in AKDN regions.
- Commercialization: technology development and industry linkages.

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[1] **Central Asia**: Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan; **South Asia**: Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan; **Eastern Africa**: Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda; **West Africa**: Côte d'Ivoire; **Middle East**: Egypt, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates (primarily for cultural and educational activities).

Operating Model & Governance.

- Global Engagement Coordinating Committee (GECC): institutional coherence across partnerships, multilateral/bilateral relations, and advancement.
- International Advisory Council on Regional Partnerships (IACRP): external regional advice on partner selection and risk.
- Global Engagement Community of Practice: entity-level data flows, best practices, risk surfacing.
- Joint Steering Committees (JSCs) for each institutional partnership to manage workplans, KPIs, and risk registers.
- Data & Risk Systems: University-wide Partnerships Dashboard and Risk Register; bi-annual reporting to leadership and Boards.

12–24-Month Signals of Progress (KPIs).

- Portfolio: growth in priority regional partnerships and South–South collaborations.
- IQRA/SDG impact: ≥3 documented cases; ≥3 policy/practice uptakes.
- Scholarly output: ≥12 co-authored papers; increased field-weighted citation impact.
- Mobility & access: ≥30 students and ≥10 faculty benefiting from mobility/experiential opportunities.
- Educational programmes: 1-2 examples of co-curricular activity, including joint courses or curricular development.
- Funding: ≥2 new joint proposals; broader funder mix.
- Governance: all institutional partnerships pass due diligence/research-security reviews.

Next Steps.

- Stand up governance (GECC, IACRP, Community of Practice).
- Clean and launch the Partnerships Dashboard/Risk Register.
- Apply the Partnerships Selection Rubric.
- Initiate/renew top-priority MOUs and establish Joint Steering Committees.
- Publish first bi-annual portfolio & risk brief with KPI baselines.

1.0 RATIONALE & ALIGNMENT WITH *AKU ONWARDS 2023-2028*

1.1 WHY GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT—WHY NOW?

Aga Khan University's mission is to advance knowledge and improve quality of life across its geographies. AKU's campuses span Pakistan, Afghanistan, the United Kingdom, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. As a relatively young university, AKU multiplies its impact through partnerships—with other Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) entities, peer universities in the Global South and Global North, governments, industry, multilaterals and civil society—while safeguarding academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

AKU's strategic plan: *AKU ONWARDS 2024–2028* commits AKU to: (i) deeper integration with AKDN communities, including extending AKU's virtual learning to priority countries, such as Syria and Afghanistan; (ii) building and strengthening institutional partnerships; and (iii) deeper linkages with policymakers and industry so AKU's research and teaching translate into impact through adoption at scale. Its Pillar 4 calls on AKU to forge high-value partnerships that drive sustainable impact across AKU's geographies. AKU's current partnership landscape is described in S. 3.0, below.

This Global Engagement Plan aligns with AKU's strategic plan and with its core principles of Impact, Quality, Relevance, Access (IQRA) by prioritising partnerships that deliver measurable outcomes for underserved communities, strengthen academic excellence and reputation, and expand equitable student, faculty, and staff opportunities. It also coheres with AKU's environmental and climate stewardship agenda, reinforcing SDG-linked collaborations across United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including: SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing; SDG 4: Quality Education; SDG 5 Gender Equality; and SDG 13 Climate Action.

Further, the Global Engagement Plan aligns with AKU's Academic Plan and the AKU Research Strategic Plan, by translating their key priorities and pillars into criteria for prioritising partnerships with respect to academic and research strengths, commitment to capacity building in core domains, including academic governance, and regional impact for AKU geographies.

The Academic Plan calls on AKU to develop strategic, objective-driven partnerships that are aligned with AKU's priorities and to audit its existing portfolio to focus on productive partnerships; to leverage AKU's regional footprint as one of its greatest assets; to build partnerships that are regionally aligned, to establish mechanisms to track and manage the lifecycle of partnership agreements, to capture the impact of partnerships; and to embed IQRA principles into AKU partnerships evaluation. The end goal is to develop and maintain a set of partnerships, with sufficient and sustainable resourcing to enable impact.

The *AKU Research Strategic Plan* outlines how "to enhance AKU's research capacity, enabling it to make significant contributions in diverse fields, and furthering its commitment to academic excellence, knowledge generation, and societal impact". The four pillars of the plan are (1) to identify and cultivate emerging research themes; (2) strengthen research, coordination and governance; (3) establish a supportive environment for the next generation of researchers at AKU; and (4) enhance AKU's impact in a knowledge society by identifying contextually relevant research metrics and improve knowledge dissemination.

1.2 THE GOAL OF AKU PARTNERSHIPS

The goal of partnerships is to amplify AKU's impact across health, education, data science, environment, and the liberal arts by working with AKDN agencies, universities, governments, multilaterals, industry and civil society—while protecting academic freedom and institutional independence; aligning with AKU principles of Impact, Quality, Relevance, and Access (IQRA); and benefiting the regions served by AKU.

Based on the above goal, during the term of the AKU Global Engagement Plan 2025 to 2028, AKU will strategically:
1. **Double the number of Institutional Memoranda of Understanding with partners by 2028 from 8 to 16.**
2. **Add at least 2 partners from priority regions.**

1.3 WHAT WE WILL PRIORITISE

1.3.1. PARTNERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

5. *Selective, Objective-Driven University Partnerships* — structure long-horizon alliances that provide reciprocal educational and research opportunities for students, faculty, and staff—especially in clinical and health sciences, education across the life-course, improved pedagogy, liberal arts/public policy, climate adaptation and resilience, environmental sciences, planetary health, sustainable/restorative agriculture, data science and artificial intelligence (AI), and the study of Muslim civilisations.
6. *Regional Partnerships* — with advice from an International Advisory Council on Regional Partnerships, develop a balanced portfolio that enhances institutional partnerships in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa to address shared research and educational priorities.
7. *UN Sustainable Development Goals* - prioritise partnerships that advance AKU's measurable contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularity SDG 3 – Health and Wellbeing; SDG 4 – Quality Education; SDG 5 – Gender Equality; and SDG 13 – Climate Action.
8. *AKDN-Integrated Impact Platforms* — co-design programme and service innovations with other AKDN Agencies, including Aga Khan Health Services and Aga Khan Schools, to reach underserved populations in AKDN priority regions effectively.
9. *Policy & Industry Partnerships for Adoption* — systematic engagement with ministries, regulators and sector partners to ensure evidence and innovations move into policy, practice and markets. Examples include immunisation programmes, emergency response, primary and mental health care, virtual care, artificial intelligence applications, maternal and child health programming, early childhood development and inclusive education, media reform, gender equity, and teacher/education quality.
10. *Autonomy, Academic Freedom & Risk Integrity* — implement robust governance that protects institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and intellectual

property/technology development, supported by due-diligence, research security, and safeguarding.

1.3.2 PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Partnership activities may be to:

1. *Strengthen academic and institutional programmes*: by co-designing curricula, enhancing programme accreditation, expanding programme relevance, strengthening Quality, Teaching and Learning, faculty development, and related activities.
2. *Grow research & grant income*: through joint funding applications and access to regional funding opportunities.
3. *Increase interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral research*: through collaborative research projects of regional relevance.
4. *Facilitate mobility*: Scale faculty mobility to enhance academic and research partnerships; staff mobility for capacity building; and student mobility for experiential learning opportunities (e.g., internships, practica).
5. *Have positive impact for communities*: via community-centred programmes of work, including development & clinical activities.
6. *Strengthen institutional capacity*: through partnerships that strengthen AKU governance, administration and technical capacity, including digital platforms.
7. *Commercialization and Technology Development:* through innovation-focused partnerships, partnerships that strengthen policies and practices for technology commercialization at AKU, and partnerships that build industry relationships for start-up company development and licensing.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1. **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** means a time-limited, non-binding agreement about the terms and conditions of a partnership and outlines, commonly in an Appendix, specific activities, deliverables and timelines.

2.2. **Institutional Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** means a Memorandum of Understanding about a partnership, in which one of the Parties is the Aga Khan University, signed by the President or delegate.

2.3. **Entity-Level Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** means a Memorandum of Understanding about a partnership, in which on the Parties is an Academic or Research Entity of Aga Khan University, signed by a Dean/Director or delegate.

2.4. **Academic Entity:** For the purposes of this plan, Academic Entity means: School of Nursing and Midwifery (SONAM), Pakistan; SONAM East Africa; Medical College, Pakistan; Medical College, East Africa; Institute for Educational Development (IED), Pakistan; IED East Africa; Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations (ISMC); Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS); University Libraries; Graduate School of Media and Communications; Centre of Innovation for Medical Education (CIME), Pakistan; CIME East Africa; Network of English Language Enhancement (ELE_net); Network of Quality,

Teaching and Learning (QTL_net); AKU Global Engagement Office; Examination Board, and AKU Research Office.

2.5. **Research Entity:** For the purposes of this plan, Research Entity means: Centre of Excellence for Women and Child Health; Centre of Excellence for Trauma and Emergencies; Brain and Mind Institute; Institute for Global Health and Development; Institute for Human Development; Arusha Climate and Environment Research Centre, and Academic Entity research Centres, such as the Centre for Regenerative Medicine.

3.0 AKU'S CURRENT PARTNERSHIPS LANDSCAPE

In 2025, the Global Engagement Office (GEO) and the Institutional Data, Analytics and Reporting (IDAR) Office, at the request of the Provost & Vice President Academic, developed a dashboard that collates all partnerships data under the management of the Global Engagement Office and each AKU Academic Entity. This dashboard will be updated annually and inform progress on this AKU Partnerships Plan.

Between 2020 and 2025, AKU developed or renewed 251 Memoranda of Understanding across the Academy, however, only 12 of these are at the institutional level (see Figure 1). MOUs span a diverse set of thematic areas of interest to AKU (see Figure 2). Most are regional or with entities in North America and Europe (See Table 1; Figure 3). Only 8 MOUs are with entities in the Middle East and Asia (See Table 1). Table 3 identifies key outcomes for existing partnerships.

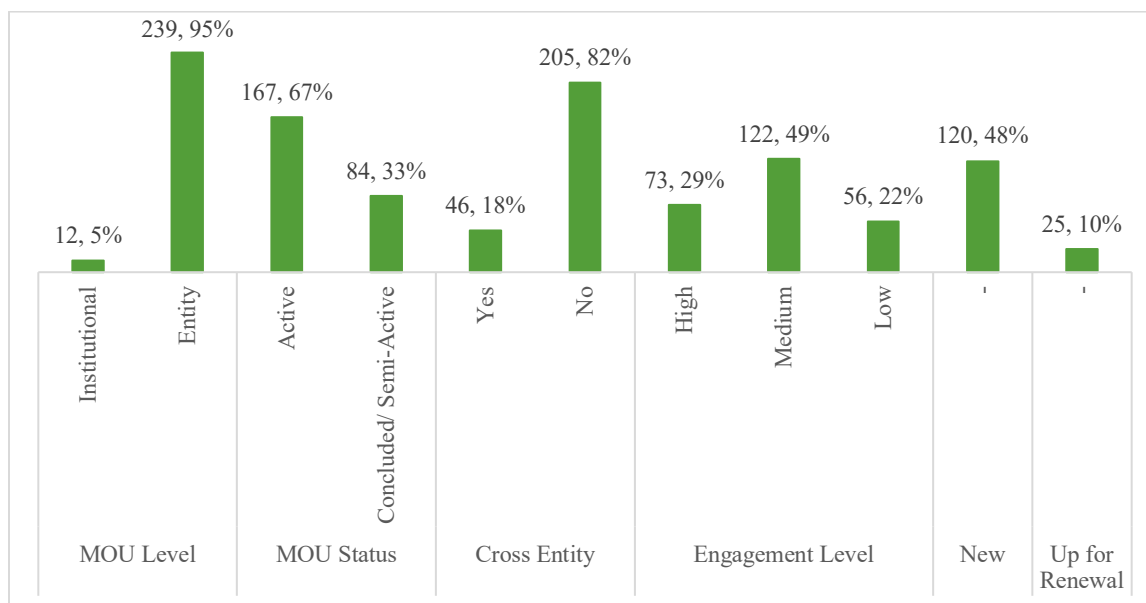**Figure 1**. Number and percentage (n=251) of partnership MOUs that are (a) at the institutional versus Academic Entity level; (b) that are active versus concluded or minimally active; (c) that include more than one Academic Entity (cross-entity); (d) that have high, medium, or low levels of engagement; (e) that have been signed since 2020; and (f) that are due for renewal (signed before 2020).

Table 1. Regional footprint of AKU MOUs (2020-2025).

Region	Count	Notable Engagements
Pakistan	111	Academic, clinical, and research collaborations across SONAM, MC, GSMC, IED
Africa	61	Mobility and joint training programmes; AKDN-linked initiatives
North America	42	Long-standing academic linkages and new high-impact partnerships
Europe	19	Erasmus+ collaborations, joint research in data and health sciences
United Kingdom	8	Muslim Cultures and Health Sciences
Middle East & Asia	8	Emerging engagements
Other	2	Global 1, EMRO 1
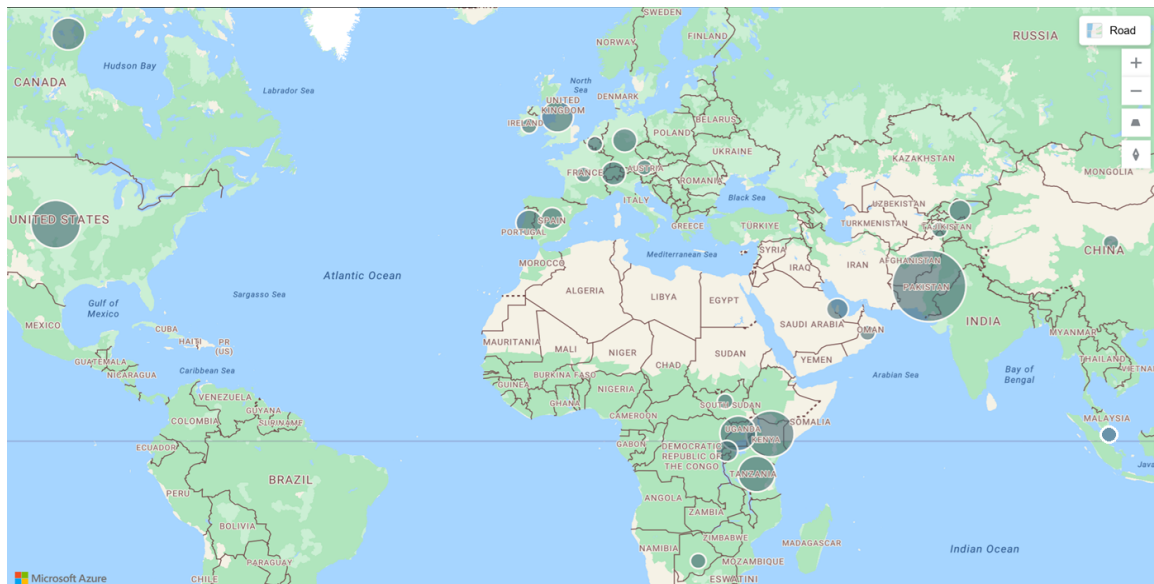
Figure 3. Map of MOUs – size of circle represents the number of MOUs per partners' country of business.

Table 2. Key outcomes for partnerships.

Outcome Category	Count	Key Highlights
Capacity Building	108	Faculty development, technical training, internships
Research Collaboration	70	Co-authored publications, joint grant submissions
Curriculum Development & Academic Events	86	Workshops, symposia, and curriculum renewal
Community Impact	96	Health and education outreach with AKDN entities
Student Mobility	51	Erasmus+, IIP, and reciprocal placements

3.2. SWOT ANALYSIS FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Strengths: AKU's activities across academia, research, clinical services and professional development; strong AKDN networks; established professional programmes and clinical sites; research-intensive university; demonstrated track record in mobility and experiential learning.

Weaknesses: Limited number of Institutional partnerships; lack of effective governance/management for active partnerships; uneven faculty incentives to participate in partnerships and partnered-activities; few partnerships in priority regions – Asia, Middle East; lack of focus on SDGs; current lack of visibility and monitoring of Entity-level partnerships.

Opportunities: Funding opportunities (e.g., EU/Horizon); strengthening digital transformation; technology development and commercialization; student and faculty mobility and enhanced programming; curricular development.

Threats: Reputational risks, fiscal exposure, non-reciprocal benefits from activities; uneven partner commitments.

In summary, Table 3 identifies current gaps and challenges and corresponding opportunities:

Table 3. Gaps and Opportunities

Focus Area	Current Gap / Challenge	Opportunities
Institutional Partnerships	Only ~5% of partnerships operate at a university-wide level, limiting AKU's global visibility and leverage.	Double the number of high-value institutional MoUs to elevate AKU's global standing and coherence across entities.
Regional Diversification	Close to 70% of partnerships are concentrated in Pakistan and East Africa, with limited footprint in Asia and MENA.	Expand engagement through Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and South–South frameworks to strengthen presence and access to new funding streams.
Governance and Coordination	Entity-led collaborations often lack system-wide oversight, visibility, and consistent risk mapping.	Institutionalize quarterly partnership reporting, due diligence, and SDG/IQRA alignment through GEO's Executive Dashboard.
AKDN Integration	Collaboration with AKHS, AKS, and AKF remains primarily project-based, missing the opportunity for cross-agency synergy.	Establish formal institutional frameworks under the AKU x AKDN Collaboration Framework to drive joint research, mobility, and capacity-building.

4.0 PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

AKU will select new partnerships and renew existing partnerships informed by global best practice (Annex A – Partnerships Selection Rubric and Key Performance Indicators):

4.1 PARTNERSHIPS PRIORITIES, INCLUDING IQRA AND SDG

4.1. AKU's Partnerships Selection Rubric and Key Performance Indicators **(Annex A)** will include:

4.1.1. Alignment on vision and mission, equity, and reciprocity.

4.1.2. Alignment on quality of programmes of academic work, including educational programmes and research.

4.1.3. Alignment on engagement and impact extending beyond academic impact, including for communities in AKDN priority regions.

4.1.4. Alignment on relevance to communities, NGOs and policy/decision-makers in AKDN priority regions.

4.1.5. Alignment on accessibility of educational programmes for students in AKDN priority regions.

4.1.6. Alignment on advancing activities and reputation for United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularily SDG 3 – Health and Wellbeing; SDG 4 – Quality Education; SDG 5 – Gender Equality; and SDG 13 – Climate Action.

4.1.7. Benefits of proposed partnership activities to students, faculty and staff and capacity building.

4.1.8. Opportunities for joint funding or available funding.

4.1.9. High standards of regulatory compliance, including legal, sanctions, safeguarding, data, and intellectual property.

4.1.10. Operational fit with respect to workload, systems, logistics.

4.2 PRIORITY REGIONS: ASIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

4.2. AKU will develop partnerships for educational programmes and research in the following priority regions:

4.2.1. *China* — establish a set of strategic partner universities/teaching hospitals around shared themes (e.g., Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), Maternal and Child Health, nursing leadership, climate-health/air quality, regenerative medicine) to enable joint research and funding applications, student/faculty mobility and educational programmes.

4.2.2. *South/Southeast/Central Asia* — establish a set of strategic partner universities/teaching hospitals around shared themes focused on SDGs 3, 4, 5, and 13. Focus on Muslim-majority countries for shared interests in study of Muslim Civilizations and responses to global challenges.

4.2.3. *Middle East* — establish a set of strategic partner universities/teaching hospitals/nursing schools around shared themes focused on SDGs 3, 4, 5, and 13. Build policy-facing collaborations with ministries and multilaterals, leveraging AKDN platforms and regional convening.

4.3. INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

4.3.1. The Provost & Vice President Academic and the Vice Provost Research will accept nominations from AKU leadership, Trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, and international partners for members of the International Advisory Council on Regional Partnerships (IACRP).

4.3.2. The Provost & Vice President Academic and Vice Provost Research will recommend members of the IARCP to the President, who may accept the recommendations.

4.3.3. The Vice Provost & Vice President Academic will report the composition of the IARCP or changes to the IARCP to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees and the national Senates and Councils.

4.3.4. The selection of potential regional partners will be guided by the IACRP.

5.0 OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE AKU PARTNERSHIPS PLAN

5.1 ENABLE DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING AND RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1. Review existing Institutional, Academic Entity, and Research Entity Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and create a Partnerships Dashboard and Risk Register:

5.1.1. Director, Global Engagement Office and the Director, Institutional Data, Analytics and Reporting (IDAR) will develop and maintain a partnerships dashboard for tracking and analyzing partnerships data and Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

5.1.2. The Director, Global Engagement Office is responsible for the identification and reporting of risks and will work with the Director of Risk Management (or delegate) to develop and monitor a risk register for each Partnership.

5.1.3. Deans and Research Directors will identify a partnerships representative in each Academic and Research Entity responsible to provide data every six months on new, ongoing, and expired MOUs as well as activities under each MOU to the Director, Global Engagement Office, or delegate.

5.1.4. Academic and Research Entity Representatives will form a Global Engagement Community of Practice, Chaired by the Director, Global Engagement Office, which will meet at least bi-annually.

5.1.5. The Director, Global Engagement Office or delegate will provide the data to the Director, Institutional Data, Analytics and Reporting, who will update the dashboard.

5.1.6. Director, Global Engagement Office will prepare a report on partnerships bi-annually, including plan update and risks, for reporting to AKU Leadership, AKU academic and research councils, and the Board of Trustees/regional Councils.

5.2 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING AND REPORTING ON PARTNERSHIPS

5.2.1. Partnerships will be a standing item on the agendas of Academic Council/Regional Senates and University Research Council at least twice per year. Provost & Vice-President Academic and Vice Provost Research will lead discussions on identifying new potential partnerships, with input from Academic and Research Entities.
5.2.2. Provost & Vice-President Academic and Vice Provost Research will consult with, and seek approval from, the President AKU on proposed new partnerships, renewals/non-renewals, and terminations of partnerships.
5.2.3. The President may approve a proposed new partnership, the renewal of an existing partnership, the non-renewal of an existing partnership, or the termination of an existing partnership.
5.2.4. The President or delegate will report on new partnerships, renewals, non-renewals, and terminations of existing partnerships to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.
5.2.5. The Provost & Vice President Academic and the Vice Provost Research will lead negotiations on AKU-level MOUs, with facilitation and support provided by the Director, Global Engagement Office.
5.2.6. Deans and Institute/Centre Directors will lead negotiations on Academic or Research Entity-level MOUs, respectively, and delegate reporting of outcomes to the individual responsible for institutional reporting on partnerships.

4.1 MANAGING PARTNERSHIPS

5.3.1. Each Institutional Partnership will have a Joint Steering Committee, with AKU membership appointed by the Provost & Vice President Academic and the Vice Provost Research, in consultation with the relevant Deans.
5.3.2. The Joint Steering Committees will report to the Global Engagement Coordination Committee at least annually.
5.3.3. The Global Engagement Office will provide the Secretariat for the Joint Steering Committees.
5.3.4. Entities should develop their own processes and committees to manage their partnerships.

4.1 AKU COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

5.4.1. Global Engagement Coordinating Committee (See Annex B for Terms of Reference)
5.4.2. International Advisory Council on Regional Partnerships (See Annex C for Terms of Reference)
5.4.3. Global Engagement Community of Practice (See Annex D for Terms of Reference)
5.4.4. Joint Steering Committees for Institutional Partnerships (See Annex E for Template Terms of Reference)

ANNEX A: PARTNERSHIP APPRAISAL RUBRIC AND KPIS

TABLE 1. PARTNERSHIP APPRAISAL RUBRIC

Criterion	Definition	Weight
IQRA Alignment in AKDN priority regions	Advancing impact, quality, relevance, access	20%
Reputation, Rankings & SDG Contribution	Advancing activities and reputation for SDG 3, 4, and 13	15%
Academic and research Complementarity	Complementary strengths; co-publishing potential	15%
Student Benefit	Mobility, supervision, experiential learning	10%
Capacity Building	Skill transfer, research opportunities, infrastructure access, administrative supports in alignment with the AKU Entity's objectives and performance	10%
Funding & Sustainability	Opportunities for joint funding, or funding available	10%
Equity & Reciprocity	Fair credit; south–south leadership	10%
Risk & Compliance	Legal, sanctions, safeguarding, data/IP	5%
Operational Fit	Workload, systems, logistics	5%

TABLE 2. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI	Target / Signal within 12-24 months
INSTITUTION: Number and breadth of partnerships	Number of priority regional partnerships in Asia and Middle East; Number of priority South-South partnerships in AKDN priority regions; Number of new international partnerships
IQRA Alignment	≥ 3 documented impact and expanded access cases
SDG (3/4/5/13) evidence cases	≥ 3 documented cases with policy/practice uptake
Co-authored outputs & FWCI	12+ papers with AKU-Partner co-authorship; ↑ field-weighted citation impact
Mobility & access	30 AKU students benefiting from in-person or virtual experiential learning opportunities with Institutional partners; 10 AKU faculty benefiting from in-person or virtual mobility opportunities with Institutional partners
Leveraged funding	≥2.0 new joint funding applications for research or other academic activities; ↑ funding and breadth of funders applied to
Policy/industry adoption	≥ 3 policies, protocols or service innovations adopted
Governance & risk	All Institutional Partnerships pass due-diligence and research/security review; risks are reviewed quarterly and annually reported to the board.

ANNEX B: GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE (GECC) TERMS OF REFERENCE – SEPTEMBER 12, 2025

Approved: DATE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

AKU is expanding its global engagement with strategic partnerships, multi and bi-lateral relationships/agreements and advancement.

2.0 PURPOSE

The Global Engagement Coordination Committee (GECC) will provide coordination across these domains to support academic and research priorities and impact in each of AKU's geographies as defined in the *AKU Partnerships Plan 2025-2028*.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 *Institutional Coherence:* coordinate opportunities and contacts between Offices of Global Engagement, Multi- and Bi-lateral Agreements within the Office of Research Services, and Advancement.

3.2 *Global Engagement Office:* Oversees the implementation of *AKU Partnerships Plan 2025-2028* through:

    3.2.1   Strategic advice on external landscapes provided by the Office of Global Engagement on trends, risks, and opportunities in higher education, health, and development partnerships;

    3.2.2   Regular review of existing institutional partnerships to ensure alignment with AKU's institutional priorities outlined in its Strategic Plans (institutional, research and academic), including active engagement, reputational enhancement, and resourcing;

    3.2.3   Strategic advice on partnership prioritization based on *AKU Partnerships Plan 2025-2028* and stakeholder feedback;

    3.2.4   Guidance on the AKU partnerships dashboard;

    3.2.5   Guidance on coordination of institutional and entity-level MOUs;

    3.2.6   Annually review AKU's partnership portfolio to highlight gaps, opportunities, and high-value pathways; and

    3.2.7   Oversight of reporting to AKU leadership, Board of Trustees, and regional councils on partnerships;

3.3 *Multi-Lateral and Bi-Lateral Agreements:* provides:

    3.3.1   Strategic advice on alignment between partnerships, advancement strategies and opportunities for multi-lateral and bi-lateral agreements; and

    3.3.2   Strategic advice on opportunities for multi-lateral and bi-lateral relationships with international funders.

3.4 *Advancement:* provides:

    3.4.1   Strategic advice on alignment between partnerships and advancement strategies, including fundraising, alumni engagement, and donor stewardship; and

    3.4.2   Strategic advice on communications that highlight global engagement successes to donors and stakeholders.

4.0 MEMBERSHIP

The membership will comprise:

4.2 Chair: Provost & Vice President Academic

4.2 Members:

    4.2.1   Vice President Research (Co-Chair);

    4.2.2   Chief Advancement Officer

    4.2.3   Director, Global Engagement Office

    4.2.4   Lead, Multilateral & Bilateral Relations

4.3 Other invitees as per agenda, including: AVPs, Deans/Directors, other stakeholders

4.4 Secretariat will be the Global Engagement Office

5.0 MEETINGS

The GECC will meet quarterly, with *ad hoc* sessions as required for time-sensitive issues and opportunities.

ANNEX C: INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved: DATE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

AKU is expanding its global engagement with strategic partnerships in priority regions, including Asia and the Middle East.

2.0 PURPOSE

1.3 The purpose of the International Advisory Council on Regional Partnerships is to provide independent, region-specific advice to AKU on identifying, prioritizing, and shaping institutional partnerships in priority regions, including Asia and the Middle East to advance educational programmes, IQRA principles (Impact, Quality, Relevance, and Access) and AKU's United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) objectives for SDG 3 – Health and Wellbeing; SDG 4 – Quality Education; SDG 5 – Gender Equality; and SDG 13 – Climate Action.

1.4 Guide the selection of potential regional partners and help AKU cultivate balanced portfolios and pathways to policy/practice adoption.

3.0 AUTHORITY & REPORTING

3.1 The IACRP is advisory to the Provost & Vice President Academic (Provost) and the Vice Provost Research (VPR).

3.2 The Provost and VPR recommend IACRP appointments to the President; composition changes are reported to the Academic & Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees and national Councils.

3.3 Advice is channelled to the Global Engagement Coordinating Committee (GECC) for system-wide coherence.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Advise on target partners/theme in priority regions, including China, South East and Central Asia, and the Middle East, considering reciprocity, equity, and risk integrity.

4.2 Recommend a partnership portfolio that strengthens: educational programmes; grows research and grant income; increases interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral research; facilitates and scales mobility for students, faculty, and staff; impact for communities in AKDN priority regions; institutional capacity; and technology development and commercialization.

4.3 Facilitate introductions to government policy/decision-makers, multilaterals, and industry to accelerate policy and market adoption.

4.4 Review partnership pipeline and risks annually, making recommendations on mitigation for the Partnership Risk Register.

4.5 Advise on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and signals of progress.

5.0 COMPOSITION & APPOINTMENT

5.1 The IACRP will comprise 8-14 external members with regional and sector expertise.
5.2 The Chair will be selected by the President from among the Members.
5.3 The Provost and VPR will be Ex Officio Members.
5.4 Nominations for membership will be accepted from AKU leadership, Trustees, faculty/staff, alumni, partners by the Provost and VPR.
5.5 The Provost and VPR will recommend members to the President for approval.

6.0 TERMS & MEETINGS

6.1 The term of each Member, including the Chair, will be two years, renewable once.
6.2 Meetings will be held virtually twice per year; *ad hoc* meetings may be called by the Chair, as required.
6.3 Quorum will be 40% of External Members.
6.4 Recommendations will be made by consensus, with differing views minuted.

7.0 DELIVERABLES

7.1 Annual Advisory Note to the Provost and VPR on priority partners, risk/mitigation, funding pathways, and KPI recommendations.
7.2 A rolling list of 10–15 vetted partner leads per priority region.
7.3 Briefs supporting specific MOU negotiations as requested.

8.0 CONDUCT & ADMINISTRATION

8.1 Members will declare any conflicts of interest and the Chair will request recusal, where appropriate.
8.2 The Director, Global Engagement Office (or Delegate) will manage the Secretariat for the IACRP
8.3 These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years.
8.4 Confidentiality will be in line with AKU policy.

ANNEX D: GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved: DATE

1.0 PURPOSE

To provide a cross-entity practitioner network to coordinate partnership data flows, including on Key Performance Indicators (KPI); share best practices in partnership selection, development and management; surface risks; and support consistent implementation of the *AKU Partnerships Plan 2025-2028*.

2.0 AUTHORITY & REPORTING

2.1 The Community of Practice is advisory to the Global Engagement Office (GEO), with escalations and summaries reported to the Global Engagement Coordinating Committee (GECC).

2.2 Partnerships data from each Academic and Research Entity will be provided for the Partnerships Dashboard and Partnerships Risk Register.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Maintain accurate, six-monthly reporting on Entity-level MOUs and activities in alignment with this Global Engagement Plan; supply data to Institutional Data, Analytics and Reporting (IDAR) for institutional dashboards.

4.2 Contribute to the Partnerships Risk Register, flagging emerging risks and opportunities.

4.3 Share practices on mobility; capacity building; community and policy impact; research and innovation, and commercialisation pathways.

4.4 Prepare a bi-annual brief for the Global Engagement Coordination Committee on portfolio gaps, opportunities, and high-value pathways.

4.5 Propose Entity-level partnership aligned to IQRA and the SDGs to be elevated to Institutional Partnerships.

5.0 MEMBERSHIP & MEETINGS

5.1 The membership shall comprise one represented selected by the Dean or Director of the Academic/Research Entity.

5.2 The Community of Practice will be chaired by the Director, Global Engagement Office.

5.3 The Directors of the Institutional Data, Analytics and Reporting and Risk Management Offices.

5.4 The Community of Practice will meet at least twice per year, and the Chair can call *ad hoc* meetings, as required.

5.5 The Community of Practice may form time-limited, topic specific Working Groups, as required to better coordinate cross-entity partnership activities (e.g., mobility, SDG reporting, IP/commercialisation).

5.6 Quorum is 50% of members; with decisions by consent.

6.0 DELIVERABLES

6.1 Updated MOU inventory and six-monthly data compilations for the partnerships dashboard and risk registry.

6.2 Review of the bi-annual Portfolio & Risk Brief to Global Engagement Coordination Committee developed by the Global Engagement Office.

6.3 Annual library of short case notes on impact, reciprocity, and policy/practice uptake to be shared with the Global Engagement Coordination Committee.

7.0 ADMINISTRATION

7.1 The Global Engagement Office shall be the secretariat for the Community of Practice, including minutes and storage of artefacts.

7.2 Terms of Reference will reviewed every two years.

ANNEX E: JOINT STEERING COMMITTEE (JSC) FOR INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS - TEMPLATE TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 This JSC governs implementation of the [AKU–Partner] Institutional Memorandum of Understanding (the "MOU"), overseeing the programme of work, risks, performance, and reciprocity.

1.2 The JSC operates within AKU's partnerships framework (IQRA; SDGs) and the MOU provisions, including IP, data, safeguarding and compliance.

2.0 AUTHORITY & REPORTING

2.1 The JSC reports at least annually to the AKU Global Engagement Coordinating Committee and equivalent Partner Committee.

2.2 The Global Engagement Office (GEO) acts as Secretariat for AKU (in coordination with the equivalent Partner Office).

2.3 The JSC cannot amend the MOU.

3.0 COMPOSITION

3.1 Co-Chairs: one senior representative from AKU and one from [Partner].

3.2 AKU members appointed by the PVPA and VPR, in consultation with relevant Deans; [Partner] appoints an equivalent slate.

3.3 Suggested roles: academic lead(s), research lead(s), operations/finance, legal/agreements, communications/advancement, and subject-matter leads for workstreams.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Approve an Annual Joint Workplan (activities, timelines, resources) across education, research, mobility, capacity building, community impact, and innovation/commercialization

4.2 Monitor delivery against the MOU and Joint Workplan; approve changes within delegated limits and escalate material variations as needed.

4.3 Track KPIs (e.g., mobility numbers, co-authorships/FWCI, joint funding applications, policy/practice uptake, governance/risk) and provide report-ready updates for GECC.

4.4 Maintain and review a Partnership Risk Register; implement mitigations (due diligence, research security, safeguarding, data/IP).

4.5 Ensure equity and reciprocity and enable South–South leadership where applicable.

4.6 Coordinate communications and donor alignment with Advancement Offices; build policy/industry engagement pathways into the plan.

4.7 Resolve operational issues; escalate strategic disputes per Section 8 (Escalation & Dispute Resolution).

5.0 MEETINGS

5.1 Cadence: quarterly, plus an inception meeting within 60 days of the MOU effective date.
5.2 Quorum: majority of members from each Party, including at least one Co-Chair.
5.3 Minutes and action logs maintained by the Secretariat; actionable decisions tracked to closure.

6.0 DECISION-MAKING

6.1 Aim for consensus; when not possible, decisions require assent of both Co-Chairs (or their delegates) and are recorded with rationales.
6.2 Time-sensitive decisions may be taken by circulation.

7.0 DELIVERABLES

7.1 Annual Joint Workplan and Budget.
7.2 Bi-annual Progress Notes and KPI dashboard entries; Annual Report to GECC and equivalent Partner committee
7.3 Updated Risk Register with mitigations.

8.0 ESCALATION & DISPUTE RESOLUTION

8.1 Unresolved issues escalate to the PVPA and VPR and the Partner's designated senior counterpart.
8.2 If unresolved, matters may be referred to the AKU President and the [Partner] executive per governance pathways agreed in the MOU.

9.0 COMPLIANCE & ETHICS

9.1 Parties comply with applicable laws, sanctions controls, safeguarding, data protection, and intellectual property provisions.
9.2 Human subjects/clinical work follows ethics/ethics review requirements of relevant entities.

1.0 TERM & REVIEW

1.1 The JSC exists for the term of the MOU and any wind-down period specified therein.
1.2 Terms of Reference to be reviewed at MOU mid-term or every 2 years.