

# DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY HUB

Respecting Human Diversity  
Enhancing inclusivity  
Promoting Access

Language, Mediation and Inclusion Research Cluster

# PRESENTATION

Anchored in the Language, Mediation and Inclusion Research Cluster (L@MI), in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hamad bin Khalifa University (CHSS-HBKU), in Qatar, the Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Hub, henceforth referred to as ACCESS HUB, is a research centre that focuses on diversity, inclusion and accessibility as the subjects of basic and applied interdisciplinary research.

The study of matters pertaining to diversity, inclusion and access need to be addressed both in depth and in breadth. These can be topic specific and based on disciplinary specialities or be cross-sectional and cross-disciplinary.

In the desire to foster dialogic understandings, the ACCESS HUB brings together expertise across disciplines such as communication and translation studies, applied linguistics, psychology, IT, as it addresses issues in specific domains such as education, the media, cultural heritage, tourism and sports, among others.

It is the ACCESS HUB's *mission* to arrive at transdisciplinary frameworks to enable holistic and in-depth understandings that are intrinsically complex and systemic in nature. Its main *aim* is to instigate social change through collaborative projects that will engage all the stakeholders in the process of finding viable solutions for real problems.

# DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY



## OVERVIEW

The ACCESS HUB brings research, education and outreach together to address social issues pertaining to inclusion and access.

All projects entail a mix of participants, including faculty, students, researchers, national and international partners, and local stakeholders.

Further to conventional academic outcomes, the applied research carried out within the hub contributes towards:

- Policy making
- Developing new products and services
- Training and capacity building
- Needs analysis, planning and implementing change
- Stakeholder engagement
- Empowering minority and disadvantaged groups

# SPECIFIC AIMS

The ACCESS HUB aims to:

- Conduct systematic (basic and applied) research for the development of theories, systems and products related to the fundamental aspects of identity, ideology, communication and translation, languages, user-sensitive inclusive design, and accessibility practices.
- Support research carried out within CHSS educational programs.
- Foster interdisciplinarity and collaboration within and beyond CHSS, HBKU and QF.
- Engage with the community, private and public bodies, and the creative industries, towards the development of impactful research that responds to local needs.
- Provide mentoring and support mechanisms to junior researchers and non-research-intensive entities.
- Develop and offer training in specific domains in collaboration with internal departments and external bodies.
- Disseminate research findings through academic presentations (seminars, conferences,...), academic publications, and public-engagement activities.
- Carry out outreach actions that will raise public awareness and interest in related topics.



# RESEARCH



2016 ART TRANSLATES project (MATHAF)  
post-activity survey

## INTERDISCIPLINARY EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Complex realities are best studied through mixed-method approaches and multi-disciplinary standpoints.

Experienced and young researchers (students attending academic programs at CHSS) often come together to carry out empirical research projects. This allows the younger generations to engage with research in a meaningful way, allowing them to address their research subjects under the guidance of experienced researchers and professionals from different fields,<sup>6</sup>





2015 Doha Film Institute with CHSS team developing first accessible film screening in Qatar

## PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Social change is more easily achieved when stakeholders themselves become agents of change. By engaging the community as active participants in research projects, addressing issues that are important to them, participatory action research promotes a research-oriented drive that usual continues beyond the given project and context.

Much of the work carried out by the ACCESS HUB falls within the principles Action Research.



2016 Hanine Taouk conducting interview about multiformat books (MA research)

## ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN DEGREE CONFERRING PROGRAMS

Students attending graduate programs at CHSS are encouraged to carry out applied research with an impact on society. While drawing on existing theoretical frameworks, direct engagement with stakeholders provides them with valuable insights regarding the feasibility and applicability of innovative approaches to solving pressing problems.



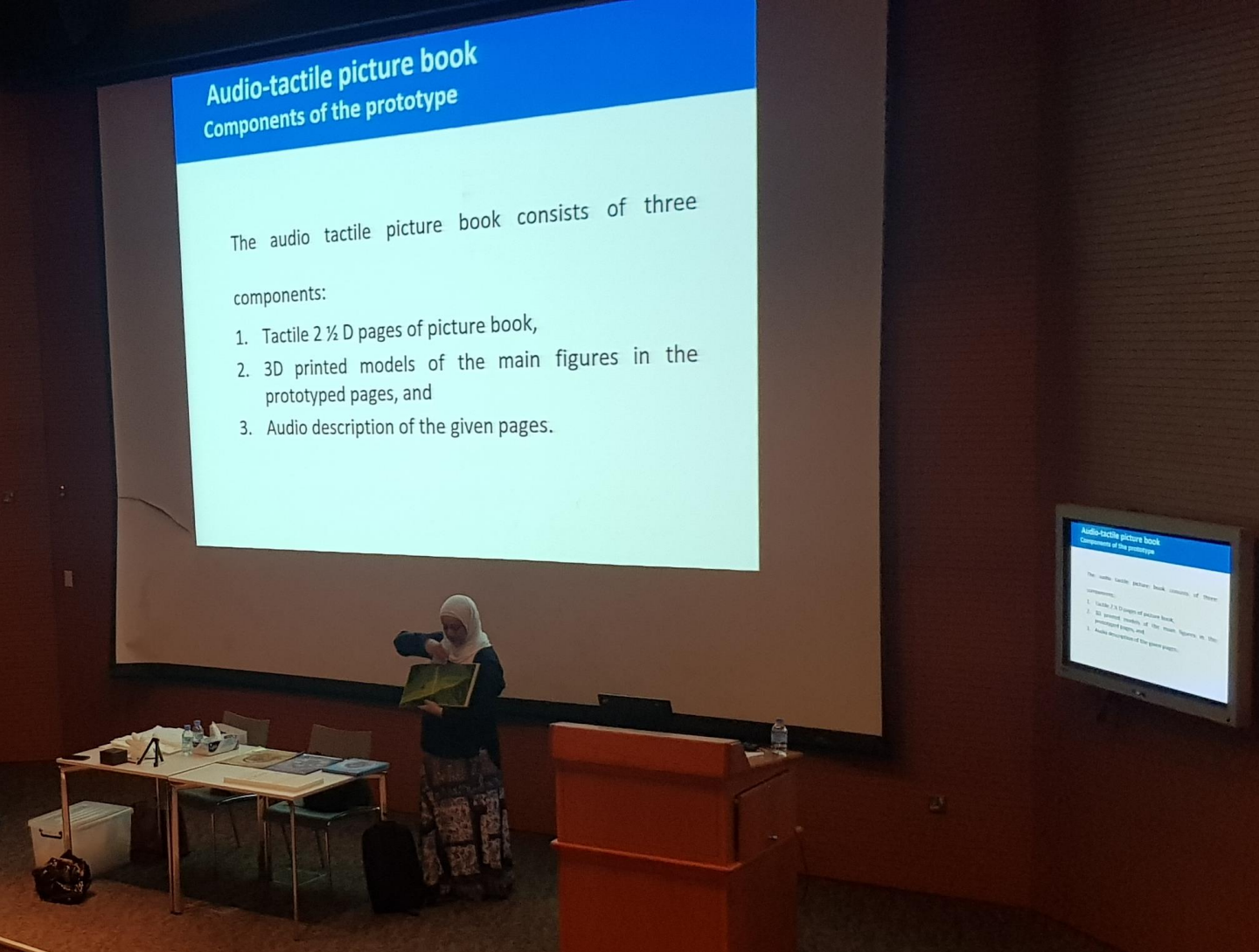


Ektashif Project

Westminster University, Qatar Museums, CHSS-HBKU

## NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH PROJETS

The research carried out at CHSS-HBKU has national and international standing. International collaborative research projects allow local issues to be addressed through the lens of international standards and practices. Multidisciplinary groups, which bring together researchers from different backgrounds, among which practitioners, lead to outcomes that are relevant to the context and of interest to broader communities.



Dina Ramadan MA Thesis research presentation at Qatar University

## PUBLICATIONS & DISSEMINATION

Dissemination of research processes and outcomes allows for the collection of feedback from peers and opens possibilities for further developments.

Valuable research outcomes are regularly presented in national and international conferences and published in established academic journals and by highly reputable publishing houses. Researchers are also encouraged to write for lay persons and sharing their outcomes in the media.



# AREAS OF EXPERTISE





- ستصيف في السوليمار مجدداً؟  
- أجل، سيسمح لي أبي بالتزلج على الماء.

- Spending summer in Solimar again?  
- Yes, dad is letting me water ski!

2021 Ajyal Film Festival

## MULTILINGUAL / MULTIMODAL AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION

An inclusive film experience in public venues entails providing the means for different members in the audience to access the cinematic whole using their personal linguistic tools and their most active senses.

Inclusive film screenings allow people from different cultures and linguistic backgrounds as well as those with sensory disabilities (blindness or deafness) to sit alongside and enjoy the audiovisual experience on equal footing.



Audio describing film in CHSS recording studio

## VOICING & AUDIO DESCRIPTION

Dubbing a film into a different language or adding description between the existing dialogue will open a range of opportunities for audiences that would otherwise be left out of the cinematic experience.

Voicing and audio description is also used in tourism and museum guides, audio books and descriptive story-telling, as well as in educational materials for language learning or for learners with specific needs.





Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Class (MAAT-CHSS)

## ENRICHED SUBTITLING

Enriched subtitling supports people's enjoyment of the audiovisual experience by translating the spoken language (in foreign films) or by presenting the written version of the spoken words in the same language of that spoken in the film.

These subtitles can be used for language learning or to provide persons with hearing impairment extra visual information about sound effects, music and speech to persons who are deaf or are hard-of-hearing.



انضم  
إلينا، فنحن بحاجة  
إلى لاعب إضافي.

10 || 30

2020 QATAR READS video cartoon stories

## MULTIFORMAT READING MATERIALS

Reading can be very challenging, particularly for young children and those with learning disabilities.

Multiformat/multimodal reading materials, such as simplified readers, audio books, animated video books, signed video books, or big print or Braille print versions, will allow readers with quite distinct abilities to engage with reading in a playful and enjoyable manner.



2019 Sensory book development at Qatar National Library

## SENSORY STORY-TELLING

Books that engage multiple senses in their exploration allow for greater engagement and enjoyment.

Interactive multisensory reading materials allow readers with learning or sensory disabilities to explore books through multiple means. This will support and enhance their sense of achievement and provide them with stimuli to engage with both verbal and non-verbal messages (illustrations) in an integrated manner.





2017 Ektashif Project (Mathaf)

## SENSORY KITS

While people may learn how to read and write at school, educational systems do not seem to invest in developing the decoding of non-verbal texts.

Sensory kits are invitations to the exploration of the world through all the senses – vision, hearing, touch, smell, taste, proprioception – while engaging emotional and cultural referencing.

Sensory exploration is of great interest in early education and of special importance in the development of children on the autism spectrum.



ART4ALL - Qatar Foundation Headquarters

## AUDIO TACTILE EXPERIENCING

Blind persons 'see' the world through hearing, touch and proprioception. Their whole body engages in receiving information about space and objects. However, decoding sensory stimuli requires a lengthy learning process.

Audio-tactile experiences are useful educational tools to enhance blind persons' ability to 'read' the world through touch.

Art exploration through audio described touch tours, for instance, makes culture available to those who are often excluded from artistic events.





Marwa Serry MA thesis  
Hamad airport yellow bear

## REPLICA DEVELOPMENT

Blind persons can only access the world through their active senses. Big objects such as buildings, sculptures and installations are particularly difficult to grasp through description alone. Scaled-down replicas of big-scale realities will give blind persons the possibility to capture the whole, by holding 3D props and exploring details through touch.

The agregation of sound and touch in the exploration of replicas has proven to give blind persons a reasonably accurate rendering of elements that would otherwise remain 'unseen'.



2021 FIFA Arab Cup Opening Ceremony

## LIVE AUDIO DESCRIPTION

Live events, such as theatre plays, music concerts, public celebrations and events are watched and enjoyed by thousands of people, who are transported to magical worlds of fantasy through light, sound, and choreographed sequences in which dance and movement recreate stories and convey emotions.

Blind patrons can share the emotion of live events by listening to detailed audio description that is carefully scripted and delivered during the performance, through personal reception devices (e.g. cell phones).





2016 Supreme Committee Disability Forum –  
Blind actors theatre performance

## INCLUSIVE PERFORMANCE MEDIATION

Live events and theatre plays performed by Persons with Disabilities deserve the support of mediators who will make their work available both to persons with and without disabilities.

Mediating such performances requires specialized strategies that will support both actors and the audience, such as: stage visits, scaled-down stage maquettes, audio description, stage surtitling, and sign language interpreting.



2021 FIFA Arab Cup

# LIVE SPORTS DESCRIPTIVE COMMENTARIES

Football games and other sports events draw thousands of fans to stadiums and sports venues to support their favorite teams or to cheer for their national athletes.

Clear detailed descriptive commentaries will allow vision impaired fans to follow such events in equal footing to sighted patrons.

Details about participants' appearance, technical performance and game development will allow listeners to create mental images of the event and everyone to join in following what happens on and around the field.





2021 Susan Al-Abbas - MA thesis  
*Zareef Al Tool* Animated short film

## ACCESSIBLE FILMMAKING

Films that consider accessibility issues as part of the filmmaking process will ensure that the product has taken all audiences into account and thus, has accommodated their needs in organic ways. By adding persons with disabilities to the crew, the filmmaking process is enriched by first-person insights that will contribute towards mitigating linguistic and sensory barriers that may otherwise go unnoticed.

Accessible filmmaking sees accessibility as a creative push rather than as an afterthought.





# SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT



2018 Accessibility Thinktank

## ONGOING DIALOGUES and SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Progress is only achieved through dialogue. Bringing people together to discuss issues of common interest from different perspectives is the backbone of collaborative multi-disciplinary research and social change. Arriving at common grounds and shared visions enhances the quality of any proposal for change.



2020 Thematic Seminar at Qatar University

## THEMATIC SEMINARS

Tailored seminars, directed towards university students, teachers and professionals allow for discussions at a more specific level.

These sessions aim to inspire participants to implement change in their professional environments by sharing the outcome of research projects, innovative ideas, and practical solutions that can be replicated in new contexts.





Accessible Hospitality Training (CHSS-TII-TTC)

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Short courses on accessibility in specific contexts: tourism, hospitality, libraries, sport venues, museums,... , for instance, are designed to introduce participants to the topic of inclusive services. These courses address accessibility in a holistic manner, looking into different aspects of the user-experience, while considering individual profiles and expectations. Special attention is given to safety and comfort throughout the journey that people take from the moment they decide to do something to the actual experience.



Disability Awareness Workshops Volunteer Capacity Building Program  
(Jasoor/Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy)

## COMMUNITY TRAINING

Every person should play an active role promoting inclusivity and accessibility in their personal and professional contexts.

Specific social competencies need to be developed in all team members involved in offering any service. The receptionist and the manager share equal responsibility in the creation of spaces and events that are safe and welcoming to all persons.

Community training, adapted to the profile of specific groups, will raise awareness and provide people with basic tools to secure human dignity in all their endeavors.





‘Giacometti and me’ art experience workshop,  
Qatar Museums, Fire Station

## SKILL DEVOPMENT WORKSHOPS

The validity of any offer depends on people’s ability to engage with the service that is being put at their disposal.

The use of tactile replicas or raised images, for instance, may be new to persons who have not been given the opportunity to develop haptic reading skills.

Tailored workshops support those who may require scaffolding to engage with new forms of mediated messaging.



Accessibility Arabic-English glossary validation (CHSS-TII-TTC)

## SPECIALIZED TASKFORCES & WORKING GROUPS

The introduction of new services in new contexts require that specialized professionals come together to establish theoretical and working frameworks to be adopted within research, teaching and service provision.

Multidisciplinary taskforces and working groups are created to address specific issues (e.g. terminology, educational approaches, project management,...) as required by stakeholders and project partners.

## Ability Friendly Coaching the Coach Program



QF Ability friendly Coaching the Coach  
online learning module

# JOINT PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

By supporting the community in developing highly specialized training programs, interdisciplinary conversations and new research avenues are established.

The added value of bringing together researchers, trainers and the community in the development of new educational offers is found in the quality of the offer, which derives from bringing theory and practice together in complementary ways.





Qatar Academy (Dis)ability awareness session

## SCHOOL VISITS

Inclusive education starts at a young age. Carefully designed sessions give children, in mainstream schools, the opportunity to think about 'difference' in a positive way.

Children are invited to take part in disabling role-playing activities, sensory story-telling sessions, and mediated communication activities to live first-person experiences that are relatable to physical, sensory and/or learning impairment. These sessions are tailored to specific age groups and student profiles.



‘Seeing through my ears... a different museum visit’  
2016 MATHAF

## AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES

The ability to understand another person’s needs comes with experience. Not everyone has engaged with persons with disabilities and less still have experienced the world with imposed limitations.

Awareness raising activities, beyond the school environment, that bring together persons with and without disabilities or that invite participants to ‘walk in somebody else’s shoes’ is a good way to instill empathy and respect for those who live with a difference.<sup>33</sup>





Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy at Al Noor Institute

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Support is made available to community members and institutions who want to deliver inclusive activities or events but do not have internal expertise. Help is often provided by CHSS students, alumni and faculty as part of their educational programs (e.g. classes, internship) or as voluntary collaboration. Such community services provide researchers with valuable insights that often lead to the development of individual or collective projects aiming to respond to actual needs.





# COLLABORATION

# PARTNERS

- Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy
- Jasoor Institute
- Doha Film Institute
- Qatar National Library
- Qatar Museums (Mathaf, Fire station, and Children's Museum)
- Msheireb Museums
- SASOL
- Qatar Airways & Hamad International Airport
- QF – Strategy, Administration and Projects, Policy Hub, Community Engagement
- Qatar Reads
- MADA
- Learn Autism
- Qatar Social and Cultural Center for the Blind
- Qatar Social and Cultural Center for the Deaf
- Audio Education Complex
- Al Noor Institute for the Blind
- Qatar Academy Sidra



# OTHER ACTIONS



## ***ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY FOR QATAR*** ***BLUEPRINT***



2020 Document presented to QF

## **POLICY MAKING & CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

Highly specialized researchers are always available to contribute towards social change by providing support to the development of new policies in the country.

Consultancy is also offered to organizations wanting to implement new accessibility practices in their institutions.



## AUDITING

Knowing existing strengths and weaknesses is the starting point when planning for change. To assess accessibility standards in any venue (or service) it is important to drive a systemic analysis that engages the local stakeholders and the auditor/researcher in an open and critical dialogue that uncovers the issues needing correction or improvement.

An encompassing analysis requires that attention be given to the built environment, communication strategies, and human interaction, in every space and service made available to internal or external users.



Master of Arts in Audiovisual Translation – Subtitling class

## ENGAGEMENT IN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Many researchers are also faculty members who are actively engaged in the delivery of courses, in the development of community engagement projects, and in the supervision of theses projects carried out by students attending Master and PhD programs at the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. The direct connection between research and teaching is of great value for all those involved.





# FACILITIES & TOOLS



## FACILITIES & LEARNING RESOURCES

CHSS-HBKU classrooms, labs and working spaces are equipped with state-of-the-art technology (hardware and software) to support learning and research.

Highly specialized technology, digital and library resources are made available to all those working on campus or remotely.

Online learning is supported by a strong learning management platform that allows for self-paced learning and collaborative or synchronous sessions.



Innovation Lab - Penrose House

## INNOVATION LAB

The innovation lab is an interactive research and project development space. It houses state-of-the art technology, among which touch screen interactive boards, 3D scanners and printers, book scanners, VR products and systems, eye tracking equipment, educational robots and related software.

The innovation lab is overseen by a dedicated IT specialist.

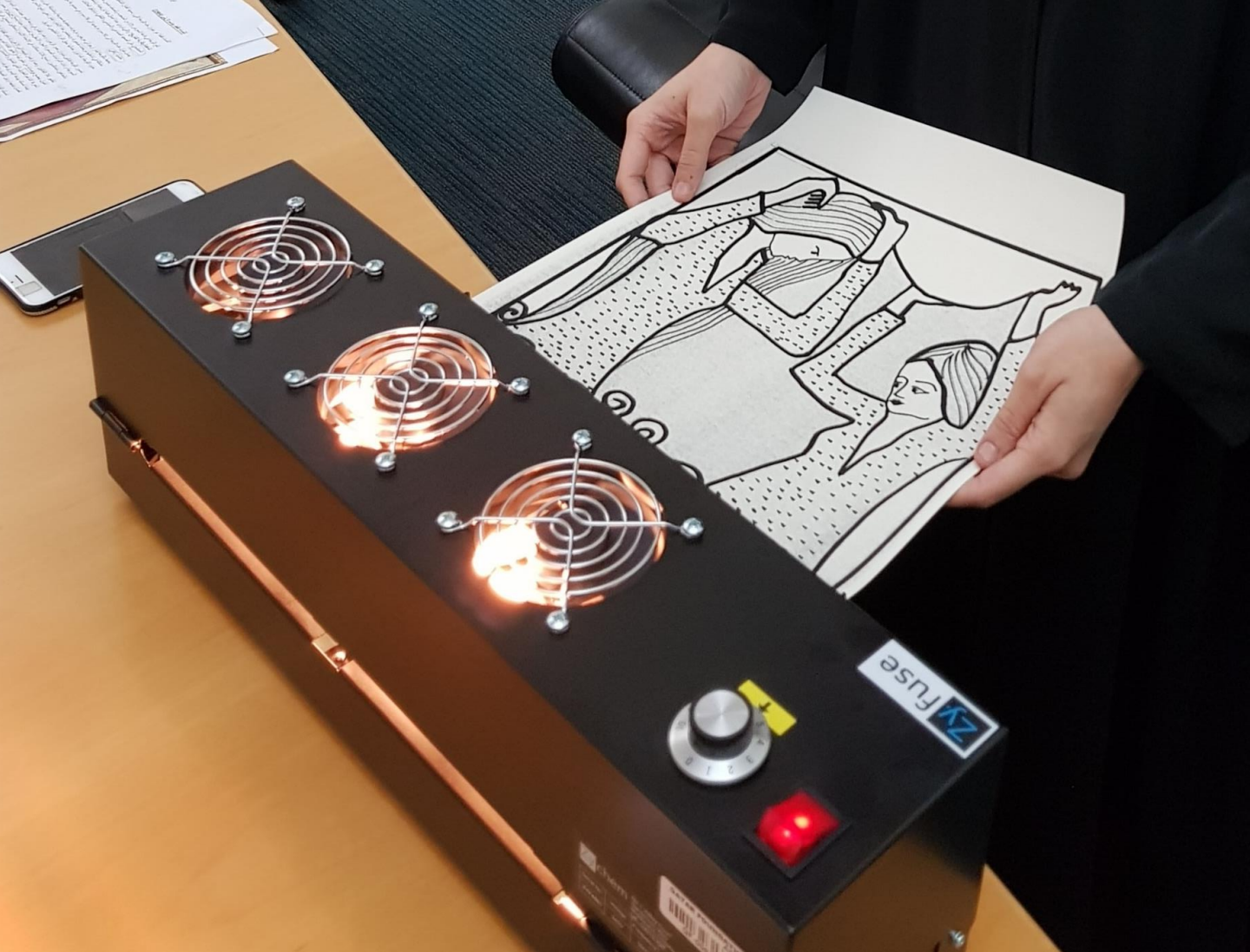




Sound production session - Rocky Gracian , AVT specialist

## RECORDING STUDIO

The recording studio, at Penrose House, has been set up to support students and researchers in their projects. It also serves the community in the creation of small audiovisual content: podcasts, conference delivery, short films, sign language interpreting captures, and audiovisual translation projects, such as dubbing, voice-over, audio description or subtitling.



Zylfuse printer to produce raised images

## 2½D HEAT FUSING MACHINE

When used with swell paper the heat fusing machine will cause the black parts of printed or photocopied diagrams or graphics to swell up and become tactile. Swell paper can be printed via a printer, used in a photocopier or marked with a pen prior to being passed through the machine.

This easy-to-use solution is an excellent learning resource for learners with vision impairment or learning difficulties.



Small scale 3D printing - Innovation Lab

## 3D PRINTER

3D printing, also known as additive manufacturing, creates three-dimensional elements.

With the existing 3D printing, we can produce functional shapes, e.g. small-sized replicas of objects, games, structures, that can be used in learning or other environments.

3D artifacts are particularly useful to learners with specific needs.





# CHSS EDUCATIONAL OFFERS

# MA in Translation Studies

The MA in Translation Studies (MATS) delivered by TII is designed to train highly skilled translators in the areas of business and commerce, science and technology, literary translation, legal and medical translation, and translation of media texts, as well as translation for international organizations.

The acquisition of practical translation competence is complemented by advanced training in the use of translation technology and work placement experience. A theoretical component encourages sophisticated intellectual inquiry, thus equipping students with a sound foundation for professional work and doctoral study in the field of translation studies.



In May 2014, validation for the MATS program was officially announced, along with the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting (FTI) Quality Label, by the University of Geneva.

# MA in Audiovisual translation

The MA in Audiovisual Translation (MAAT) delivered by TII is designed to train specialists in the mediation of audiovisual texts, both for foreign language viewers and sensory-impaired audiences.

The flourishing field of audiovisual translation opens itself to fundamental and applied research in a wide range of domains. Taking audiovisual text as its focus area, research can address technical and technological issues, as well as linguistic and/or cultural and ideological issues. In audiovisual translation, socially oriented scholars will find ample space for applied research with an impact in domains such as television, the arts, and in cultural and educational contexts.



In May 2016, validation for the MAAT program was officially announced, along with the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting (FTI) Quality Label, by the University of Geneva.

# MA in Intercultural Communication

Students in this program will engage in research, education, and outreach with a view to understanding the challenges of today's changing intercultural settings in Qatar and worldwide.

The program aims to respond to these changed societal demands, including the need for court interpreting, community interpreting, and medical interpreting – the three mediational forms of interpreting in intercultural settings and work environments that are specific to Qatar. The program will also offer courses on intercultural communication and the use of digital technologies to achieve effective intercultural communication in an inclusive and accessible society.

Additionally, research in the intercultural communication field will generate new policies and e-applications geared towards implementing the outcomes of the distinct features of the program. These program outcomes will lead to the creation of innovative applications fit for heading transformative changes in Qatar and globally.



# MA in Women, Society and Development

The MA in Women, Society and Development is a two-year interdisciplinary program focusing on issues related to women in the context of social and economic development in the Middle East, as well as women's various roles in the advancement of their communities and societies. It draws on a variety of disciplines in social sciences and humanities, ranging from economic and social theory, to development and policy studies, to law and communication studies.

The program fulfills Qatar's aspiration to contribute to global sustainable development in matters related to women and gender issues. It also provides the nation with a think-tank capability on women-related issues that can be used for coherent national policy-making that crosses the commercial, health, education and family sectors.

The program is open to all those interested in developing expertise in a wide variety of issues related to women, society and development in the Middle East.

# MA in Digital Humanities and Societies

The MA in Digital Humanities and Societies is a two-year program that allows participants to study the Middle East's digital culture from a scholarly and digital research perspective.

Through the program, students are able to specialize as archival print scholars of Middle Eastern digital culture or as researchers trained to employ the powerful methodologies of the digital humanities to investigate practices, patterns and trends of digital culture.

The MA in Digital Humanities and Societies program welcomes applicants with an interest in digital cultures and digital humanities, including students who have recently graduated from an undergraduate program, entrepreneurs, project managers, and working specialists in IT, public relations, communications, libraries and cultural heritage.

# PhD in Humanities and Social Sciences

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Humanities and Social Sciences is the first degree of its kind in Qatar, and one of the few in the world providing students with the philosophical and technical grounding to design and tailor their own interdisciplinary program while being able to specialize through a dissertation.

The program, accommodating students who wish to apply their interdisciplinary research in a variety of subjects in the fields of humanities and social sciences, while allowing for specializations through a pathway to a PhD in an established field at the time of graduation. It exposes them to identity making, policy-making, development strategies, institution building, leadership guidance, and sustainable development.

Students will draw from a common curriculum and gain skills in interdisciplinary research yet graduate with a PhD in a field that will offer them strong employment opportunities. Aligned with the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030, the program equips its students with the personal and professional skills to ensure all graduates are prepared to work globally, with strong sustainability values and connections to the community



# KNOW MORE

at

<https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/chss>

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