

UK Science & Innovation Network Summary

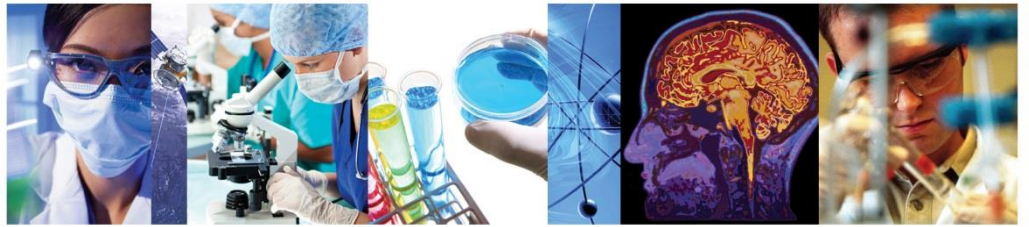
United Arab Emirates (UAE)

The UAE is a constitutional federation of seven emirates: **Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah, Ajman, Fujairah, and Umm al-Quwain**, with Abu Dhabi as the capital city. The UAE has a population of around 10 million people. The current president of the UAE, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, elected on May 14, 2022, acts as the ruler of Abu Dhabi and the supreme commander of the UAE military forces. GDP per capita is \$US 67,981 (Sustainable Development Report). The UAE is the 2nd largest Gulf economy, and the 29th largest in the world.

The UAE is ranked 16th in the World Bank's [ease of doing business](#) overall ranking (2020), but first in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, holds the 25th position globally in [Global Competitiveness Report 2019](#) by World Economic Forum and is an entry route into other [Gulf Cooperation Council](#) (GCC) countries. The United Arab Emirates' [total ODA](#) (~USD 1.9 billion) increased in 2023, representing 0.37% of gross national income (GNI), contributing to the global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Science and Innovation Landscape in the UAE

The UAE has a vision and objective of transforming its economy, traditionally based on oil production, to a more diversified and sustainable economy with an important component based on R&D, technology, knowledge and innovation. The '[We the UAE 2031](#)' strategy and action plan place the UAE as the global force in emerging sectors and industries of the future, a leading destination for research and development, and an attractive incubator for future innovators and entrepreneurs. The UAE has launched a few strategies for a future-based economy: [UAE Centennial 2071](#), a roadmap for increasing investment in AI, biotech, nanotech, cognitive sciences; [The UAE Green Growth Strategy](#) aiming to achieve sustainability in economic, social and environmental sectors; [the UAE strategy for the fourth industrial revolution](#) to create an economy that is based on futuristic applications that merge material, digital and biological technologies.



The UAE benefits from a growing research environment that has a strong infrastructure, a multitude of academic institutions, and many foreign and national researchers. This is evident by recent statistics: the UAE is a successful higher education hub, hosting one the largest number of international branch campuses in the world (31 international, incl. 13 UK providers); the UAE leads Arab Countries in relation to innovation; and the UAE universities rank among the world's best according to the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2024.

UK-UAE collaboration in science and innovation

The UK and the UAE have a shared agenda in many areas of political and practical co-operation, borne of many years of collaboration since before the United Arab Emirates was formed. Find out more news on our [UK and United Arab Emirates news page](#). Approximately 130,000 UK citizens live in the UAE. Now that the UAE accelerates its transition to a knowledge economy beyond oil, the UAE and UK as nations and citizens are working hand in hand to boost their respective economies through various initiatives. The UK and UAE have a history of strong collaboration on education, with eight UK university branch campuses in the UAE, 33 [COBIS](#) accredited British schools and over 8000 Emiratis studying at UK universities.

Many new collaborations in science and innovation are driven by either existing relationships, trust and historic partnerships or by government to government initiatives. Given that the UAE is a non-ODA country, funding opportunities must be identified through individual industry, government or academic stakeholders. Considering this, some funding support has been obtained from the UK Government to seed bilateral activity. SIN UAE supports the delivery of the [UK International Research and Innovation Strategy](#) as well as support to key international commitments such as the [Paris Agreement on Climate Change](#). SIN UAE actively works with the below key stakeholders to advance bilateral opportunities in 5 key sectors:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Health and Life Sciences
- Sustainability and the energy transition
- Climate Change and Environment
- Space



Local key stakeholders for the SIN team include:

Artificial Intelligence Office, UAE; Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology UAE; Ministry of Climate Change and Environment; Environment Agency Abu Dhabi; Dubai Future Foundation; Ministry of Health and Prevention; Department of Health Abu Dhabi; Dubai Health; Mohammed Bin Rashid University, UAE Space Agency; MBR Space Centre; Khalifa University; UAE University; Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence; Zayed University; Abu Dhabi University; UK Universities in Dubai (mainly Birmingham, Heriot-Watt and Manchester); Sharjah Research and Technology Innovation Park; American University of Sharjah; NYU Abu Dhabi; University of Khorfakkan; Masdar City; Technology Innovation Institute.

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