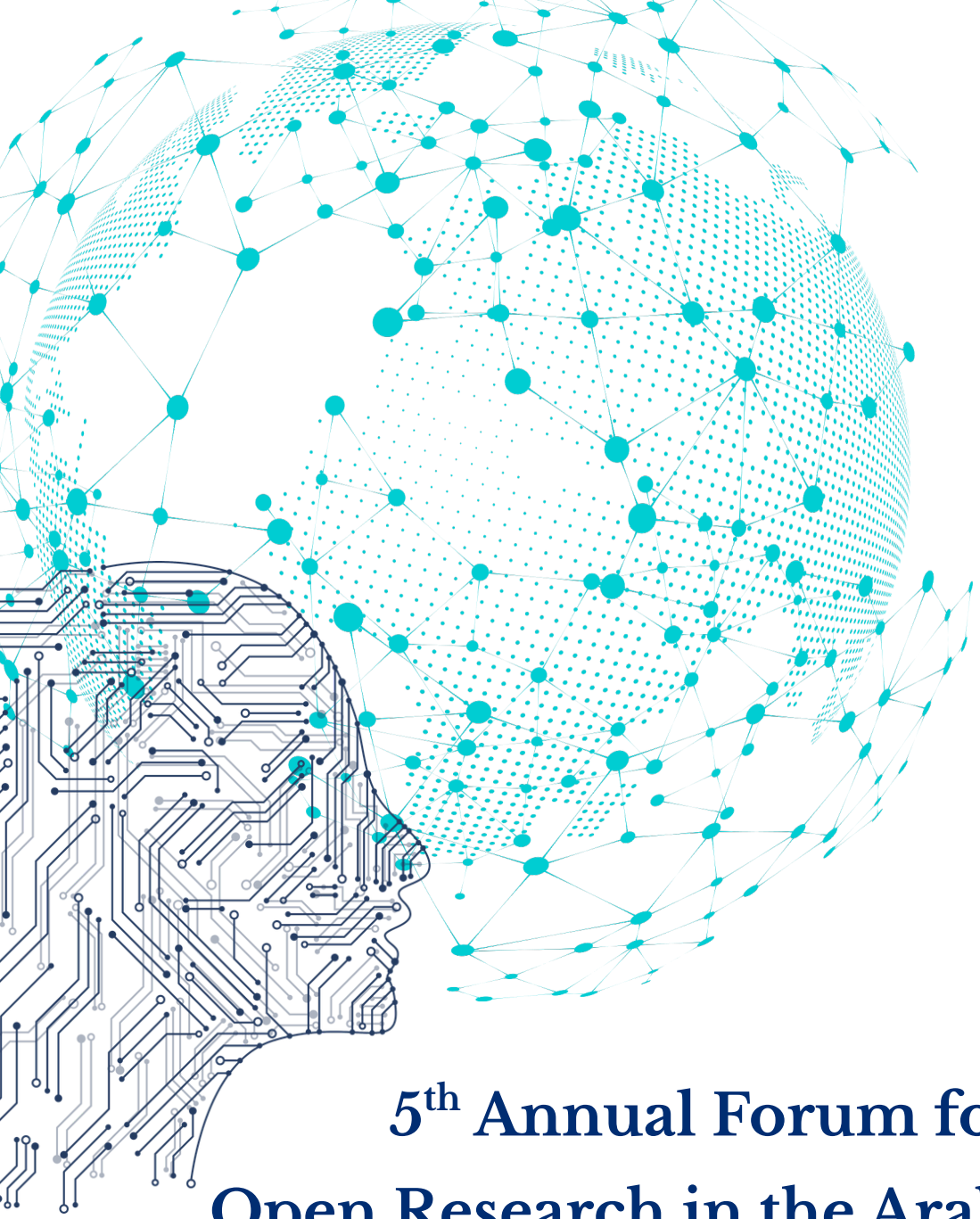


5th Annual Forum for Open Research in the Arab World

Resilience in Research

The Role of Open Science in the Arab World

19-21 OCTOBER 2026

F.O.R.M.

Our Partner





Highlights

Bringing together leading international experts and key regional stakeholders, the Annual Forum for Open Research supports the Arab world's transition towards more accessible, sustainable and inclusive research and education models. This year's Annual Forum, our fifth, had over 1450 delegates, from over 950 institutions, in 94 countries across the world.

Usually, we focus on a broad theme designed to encourage proactive engagement with every aspect of open science, reflecting the Annual Forum's purpose as a place for the region's open science communities to gather together, to learn from each other, to build collaborations and plan for the future. This year, however, against a backdrop of increasing geopolitical tension both within the Arab world and across the globe, we decided to focus this year's event on the challenges which we face as scientists, researchers, librarians, university administrators and policymakers – the challenges with developing and maintaining sustainable and resilient infrastructures in the face of conflict. These challenges do not simply occur during periods of crisis but extend well beyond, affecting recovery and longer-term development. And they do not merely affect the Arab region: countries in every part of the world are currently facing issues, or have in the recent past, or might in the near future.

We therefore felt it was important to address these challenges, to understand what barriers to open science exist in the specific circumstances surrounding times of crisis and conflict, and their aftermath, and what we – as open science advocates, as regional organisations, and as scholarly



ommunications solutions providers – can and should do to help overcome these challenges and ensure the resilience of our research communities. We therefore selected the theme 'Resilience in Research: The Role of Open Science in the Arab World', and moved the whole event online (maximising accessibility whilst also ensuring the safety of our delegates).

Our Programme brought together a range of voices and viewpoints from across the region to discuss these challenges, exchange insights and find solutions. And I want to thank all our speakers for their honesty and courage in sharing their insights and experiences – many of which related to extremely painful and personal developments. The purpose of this year's event was to provide a forum to discuss these difficult developments, to ensure that these struggles are seen and heard, that these experiences of times of crisis, conflict and their aftermath are shared and preserved in order to help others undergoing similar circumstances now or in the future.

Because one of the most important things highlighted during this year's Annual Forum is that any country and any community could face a period of crisis or conflict. Therefore, regardless of whether we live and work within the Arab region or elsewhere in the world, we should all be listening to the experiences shared over the last two days by librarians, researchers, policymakers and open science advocates – and not only listening, but engaging and absorbing. Because we should not wait until the moment of crisis to start to develop and implement resilience strategies, we should already be planning ahead and building strong stable frameworks and processes to protect our vital research infrastructures, to develop and implement redundancy protocols and alternative resource channels, to train our researchers and librarians in best practices for dealing with times of crisis and recovery.



We should all have strategies in place to deal with the destruction of physical infrastructures; the loss of internet access and the digital tools and resources which require internet, and the concomitant fracturing of knowledge systems and research continuity; the isolating constraints on collaboration networks and loss of connection with the global academic community; the impact on funding; the displacement of scholars and long term risk of brain drain; and damage to knowledge systems (human, institutional and relational).

Reflecting these crucial priorities, our speakers provided a range of clear, actionable, and practical examples and suggestions for how to deal with these challenges and build strategic resilience models (designed to support both the individual and the institution). And all of these pragmatic recommendations for maintaining and preserving key resources, adapting existing structures to improve resilience, and rebuilding capabilities and strengthening institutions for the future, are now available as open and accessible resources to be shared with our community.

The concluding message from the 5th Annual Forum was that research resilience this is a collaborative endeavour. We cannot overcome the challenges presented by crisis and conflict unless we work together as a community – to protect our fragile academic ecosystems, to support the growth of open science cultures, preserve academic freedoms, and to help our scholars, institutions and journals to survive – and not only survive but thrive.



Key Statistics

Scientific Programme

3 Days

14 Sessions

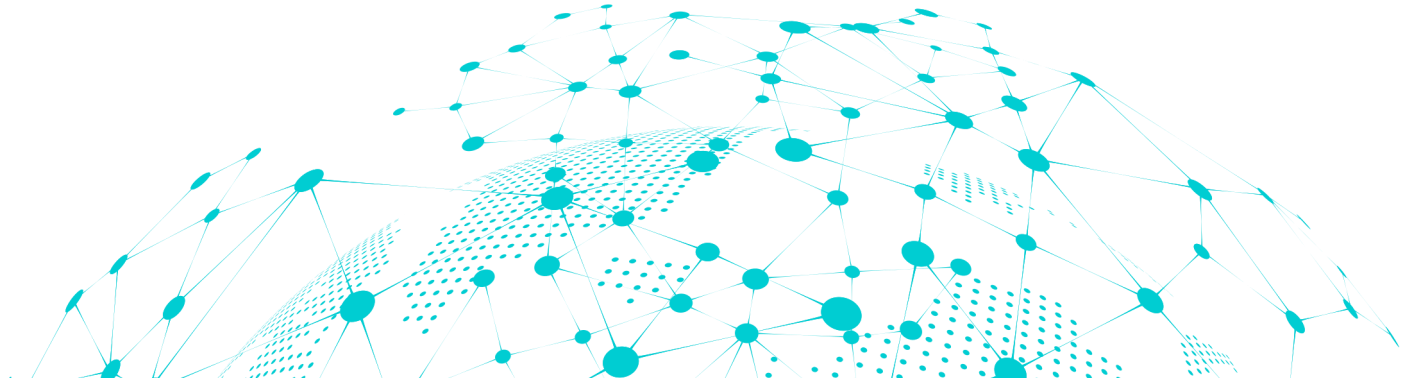
50 Speakers

Delegate Demographics

1450+ Delegates

950 Institutions

94 Countries



Delegate Feedback



100%

Conference format was successful and appropriate for delegates



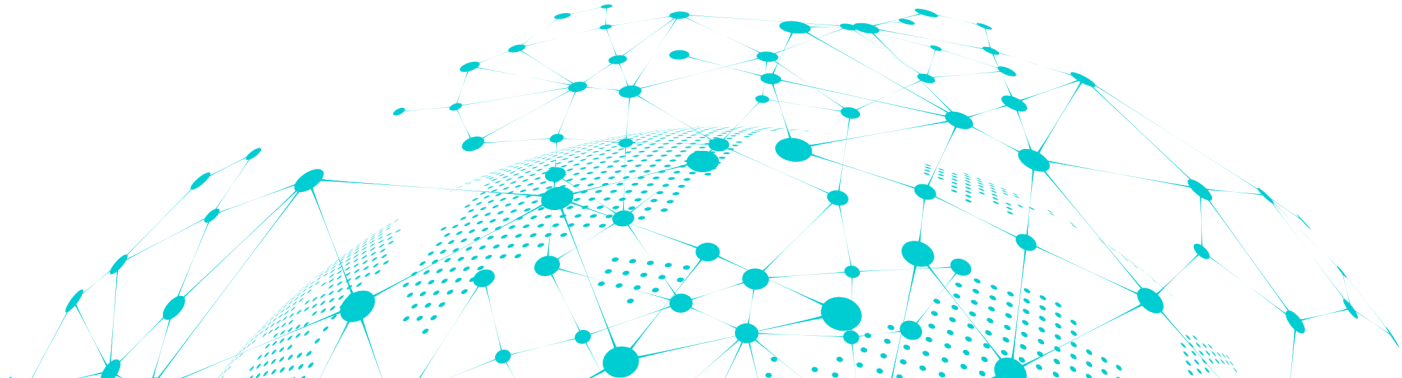
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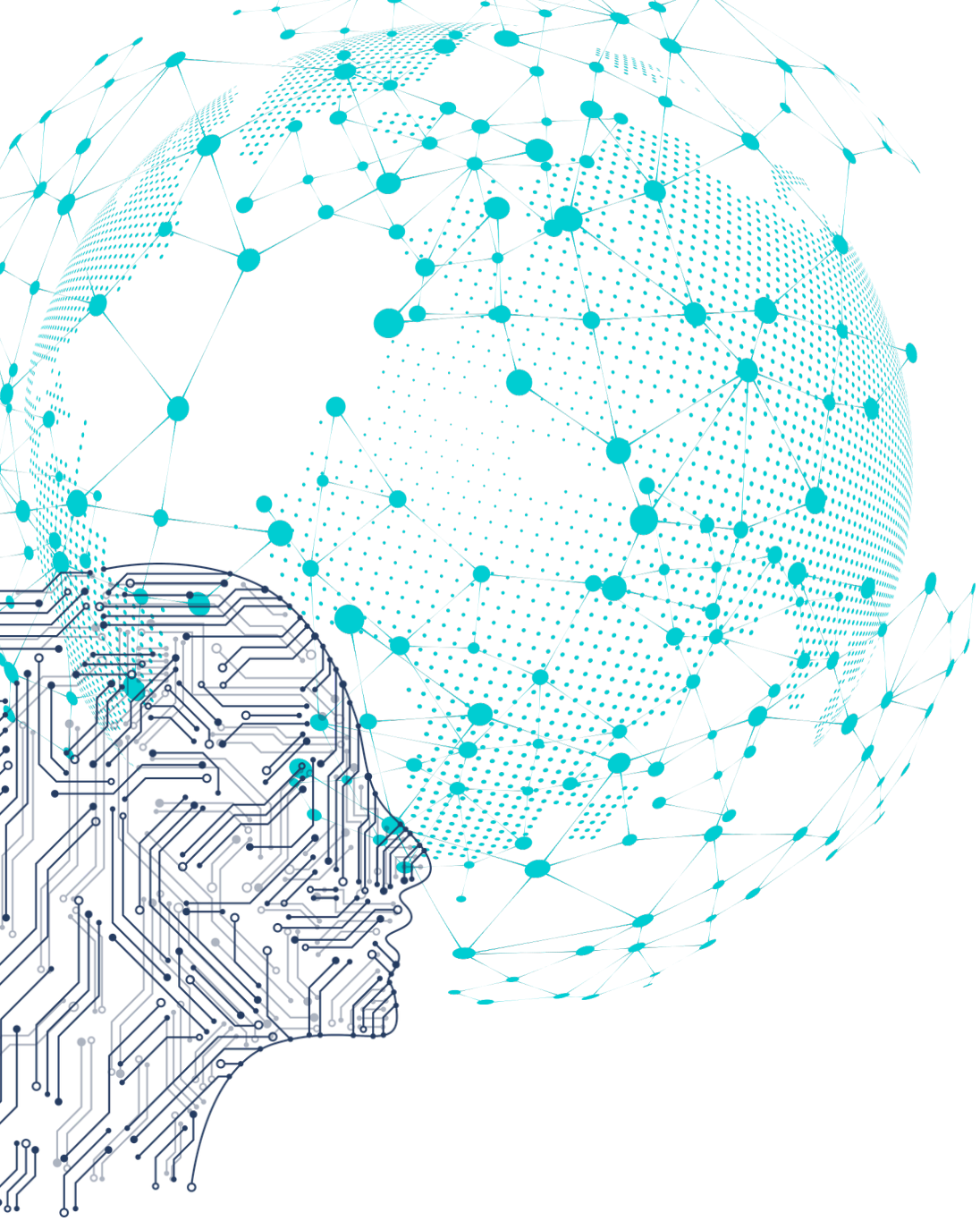
Conference content was useful and valuable for delegates



99%

Conference sessions and insights will support professional goals of delegates





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