

COVID-19 Awareness Contest Kick-Off

"Our beloved UAE deserves from us the best of our time, efforts, and participation. As a responsible citizen, it is my pleasure to respond and support such awareness contest initiative to raise awareness and empower the public with potential precautions measures and creative practices toward the Coronavirus outbreak."

Dr. Khaula, Chief Innovation Officer at UAEU and Associate Professor at the Geography and Urban Sustainability Department at the College of Humanities and Social Sciences who is also a participant in the Coronavirus Awareness Contest.

The SIP kicks-off its first digital workshop under the name "Coronavirus Awareness Contest" today. For a week, the participants will go through design thinking sessions where they will learn from professionals how to use design thinking methods to produce visual materials on raising awareness to fight against the Coronavirus outbreak. Followed by an actual implementation of what they learned to produce creatives. The contest registration was open for all community members, the participants are from a wide range of backgrounds all will be utilizing remote co-working to produce interesting outcomes.

More than 25 participants will be working together in teams to produce awareness content to raise awareness on the prevention of the Coronavirus outbreak. The contest starts with two days design thinking workshops to explore and learn how they can use the modern methodology to outline their ideas before they start working on producing them in the following days. The participants are accompanied by mentors from the UAE University Outreach Department (UOD) and the Publication Press Unit who will be closely working, assisting and supporting them on using the provided designing tools to build their creatives. Each team will submit their creatives by Saturday 28th of March. Winners will be announced on Monday 30th of March.

"I expect great outcomes and good interaction with the students from the digital workshop" Dr. Fadi Shalabi, the entrepreneur who had founded [Niuversity](#). Dr. Fadi has over 20 years of experience in teaching, 5 years of which is online teaching. *"We're feeling lost reading about the Coronavirus online, the information is confusing and it's not easy to understand. The SIP is setting a role model in coping with the situation by taking the lead in initiating this awareness contest which will help develop easily consumable content by the public."* He added. *"There has always been resistance to online education compared to the physical, traditional way. Today is a good chance to experiment ways to embrace the online education culture. It's also an opportunity for the Arab content creators to start solving the lack of availability of courses taught in the Arabic language."* Dr. Fadi added commenting on the current situation of digital teaching.

We have asked the participants on what they are looking to learn from their participation, and Dr. Khaula answered *"The biggest risk is not to try! As scholars, we are always eager to learn from life challenges, experiences, opportunities and lessons. I hope the impact of such contest can lead to materializing the submitted creatives, and assist in raising them to relative stakeholders for better and safer community."*

Wissam Ali, who's taking charge of this initiative had told us about the story of the contest and we are bringing it to you! *"SIP was originally planning to organize a Makeathon for UAEU students on the week of March 22-26. However, when faced with this Corona challenge that has forced us to postpone our physical assemblies then we thought of replacing this event into something else. We figured that we should turn this challenge into a new opportunity. An opportunity to gather students, professionals and faculty members virtually so they join the fight against this outbreak! That's how we decided to run this awareness contest this week. We are confident that the contest participants will have an amazing learning experience and a great fulfillment as they engage in servicing their community during difficult moments. We are looking forward for this great experience where people from diverse background will collaborate, co-create and share experiences in order to produce the best awareness message."*