

Abu Dhabi University signs MoU with Atkins to enhance collaboration in nuclear and energy sectors

Abu Dhabi University (ADU), one of the leading academic institutions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Atkins, the leading global design, engineering and project management consultancy, that aims to enhance academic cooperation and exchange of scientific expertise between the two organizations in nuclear and energy sectors in the UAE.

As part of the five-year agreement, ADU will partner with Atkins to develop and deliver targeted trainings, activities and events that present educational programs about nuclear power and energy solutions and collaborate on research and scientific studies in the field. In addition, Atkins will provide training opportunities, including internships and project experience for ADU's students, helping to build local capabilities and create job opportunities in the nuclear sector. The MoU was signed by Professor Ghassan Aouad, Chancellor, ADU, and David Haboubi, Head of Nuclear and Net Zero Energy, Middle East & Africa, at Atkins, a member of the SNC-Lavalin Group.

Professor Ghassan Aouad, Chancellor of ADU, said: "Abu Dhabi University is committed to enhancing research and innovation in key sectors, including Environmental Health and safety, nuclear and energy. This MoU with Atkins will provide valuable opportunities for our students and faculty to collaborate with industry experts and gain practical experience in these fields. We look forward to working closely with Atkins to develop educational programs and research initiatives that will contribute to the UAE's sustainable development goals and build local capabilities."

"With over 50 years' presence in the Middle East, Atkins has played a key role in developing and enhancing the region's nuclear and first-of-a-kind energy projects, which are critical to achieving a net zero carbon future," said Haboubi. "We are truly excited to strengthen our working relationship with ADU through this collaboration, to further build the great talent that the University has by providing targeted research, projects and career opportunities." The UAE will host the 28th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) in November 2023 at Expo City Dubai to unite the world towards agreement on bold, practical and ambitious solutions to the most pressing global challenge of our time. As host, the UAE will mobilize action around a "major course correction" to accelerate emissions reductions while ensuring energy security. Globally, SNC-Lavalin has developed the '[Engineering Net Zero](#)' (ENZ) program, which focuses on leading the engineering industry to achieve Net Zero Carbon as rapidly as possible by helping clients manage climate risks and build climate resilience.

Abu Dhabi University is the largest private university in the UAE committed to providing graduates with the knowledge, skills, and mindset to become leaders of tomorrow, and engaging in research and innovation that make a difference to society. With five colleges offering over 50 undergraduate and postgraduate programs, campuses in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Dubai and Al Dhafra Region, and multiple affiliations with globally renowned institutions, ADU has the largest engineering college in the UAE, covering a diverse range of engineering and technology programs to more than 2,000 students.

The SNC-Lavalin Group, including Atkins and Faithful+Gould, has the biggest private nuclear capability in the world with a global track record of success in delivering nuclear

projects and end-to-end engineering services for the entire project life cycle from the concept stage to design and technology development, including new-build programs, and from asset management through to end-of-life and waste management. Since 2011, Atkins has been a trusted advisor, engineering services, and project management partner on the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant, the first nuclear power plant in the UAE. In line with its commitment to building local talent, Atkins has provided internship and training opportunities to over 30 Emiratis to gain technical expertise and practical knowledge in nuclear through mentorship and on-the-job training.

