

With a vision to strengthen academic excellence and drive community engagement

Abu Dhabi University Leads Regional Dialogue on Advancing Education in the Middle East

- The university brought together advancement professionals from across the region to learn, share, and explore the future of educational advancement

Abu Dhabi, UAE, 12 February 2026: [Abu Dhabi University](#) (ADU) concludes the Middle East edition of the **CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) Advancement Symposium**, held from 10–11 February 2026. The two-day symposium brought together regional and international advancement leaders, development professionals, alumni relations experts, and marketing and corporate social responsibility (CSR) practitioners to explore emerging trends, innovative strategies, and best practices in fundraising, communications, and alumni engagement, marking a significant milestone in higher education advancement in the Middle East.

The event saw participation of 17 universities and institutions across the Middle East, including the American University of Beirut, Lebanon and Al Hussein Technical University (HTU), Jordan. Key speakers and facilitators included HE Faisal Alhmoudi, Executive Director of the Social Investment Fund at the Authority of Social Contribution – Ma'an, Nilanjana Pal, Executive Director of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, and Susie Balch, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement at New York University Abu Dhabi, who shared insights on topics such as philanthropy in the region, donor engagement strategies, alumni loyalty programs, and leveraging emerging technologies to support sustainable institutional growth.

Professor Ghassan Aouad, Chancellor of Abu Dhabi University, said, "Hosting the CASE Middle East Advancement Symposium reflects ADU's commitment to pioneering institutional advancement and professional development. By bringing together regional and international leaders, we are equipping our teams and partners with the knowledge, tools, and strategies needed to drive meaningful engagement, strengthen alumni relations, and advance the university's strategic goals. This milestone not only positions ADU at the forefront of higher

education advancement in the Middle East but also reinforces Abu Dhabi's role as a leading hub for innovation, education, and knowledge exchange, attracting global expertise and fostering collaboration across the region."

The CASE Middle East Advancement Symposium offered participants a structured and immersive learning experience that combined expert-led discussions, interactive workshops, and networking opportunities designed to strengthen professional expertise and institutional impact. Over the two days, attendees engaged in dedicated tracks focused on fundraising and alumni relations, explored practical strategies for integrated advancement, and examined case studies illustrating successful approaches to alumni engagement, donor relations, and institutional growth.

CASE is a global nonprofit association supporting educational institutions and advancement professionals in more than 80 countries. The organization provides frameworks, training, and resources for fundraising, alumni relations, communications, and institutional development. By bringing the symposium to the Middle East, ADU offered participants from the region a unique opportunity to engage directly with CASE's global expertise and connect with an international community of advancement professionals, emphasising the UAE's commitment to delivering measurable impact for institutions, students, and wider communities.

Sue Cunningham, President and CEO, Council for Advancement and Support of Education, said: "It has been incredibly heartening to see the Middle East Advancement Symposium (MEAS) bring together such a committed and engaged community of advancement professionals. CASE is proud to support our members in the region through programmes that reflect local context while connecting to global best practice, and MEAS is a powerful example of that commitment."

By hosting this symposium, ADU reinforces its focus on building strong alumni networks and advancing institutional practice as a leader in higher education. Anchored by initiatives such as ADU Alumni Academy, the university supports student development and community engagement while providing a regional forum for collaboration and knowledge exchange. Through this approach, ADU continues to strengthen collaboration, foster innovation, and



support sustainable institutional development across the region. For more information on the symposium, please visit: <https://www.case.org/conferences-training/2026-middle-east-advancement-symposium>

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