

Chamber Goes Nuclear

Unleashes Bahrain's first research weapon



● **First-ever Business Lab launched**

● **Research to fuel real outcomes**

● **Bold shift in innovation strategy**

Mahir Haneef
TDT| Manama

A first-of-its-kind ‘Business Lab’ is being launched through a partnership between the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Yusuf bin Ahmed Kanoo Award

to turn academic research into real-world economic solutions. The initiative aims to bridge the gap between economic research and private-sector needs by testing the outcomes of studies in semi-practical settings before broader implementation. Officials say this marks a bold shift in Bahrain’s business innovation landscape, where data and applied knowledge are increasingly becoming central to growth strategies.

Tapping research potential
Speaking at a meeting with the award’s Board of Trustees, Chamber Chairman H.E. Sameer Abdullah Nass said the lab will help align scientific research

with market realities and national priorities. H.E. noted the Kanoo family’s long-standing role in supporting knowledge-based initiatives and praised the award for promoting research excellence in strategic sectors. H.E. added that the Chamber has, over the past eight years, invested in building its internal research and analytical capabilities through a dedicated Studies and Initiatives Department and the launch of a Strategic Think Tank. These bodies aim to generate forward-thinking insights for the benefit of the private sector.

Lab-based approach
Among the proposed initia-

tives discussed was the establishment of a joint Business Lab to test research findings before they are scaled for national use. Also proposed was a new award sub-category focused on applied economic research offering practical, business-ready solutions. The meeting further discussed the idea of incentivising private-sector companies to fund or adopt relevant research outcomes by offering institutional recognition and media exposure as development partners.

Bridging business, academia
Other proposals included the formation of a joint coordination committee or digital platform to steer research toward

Bahrain’s top economic priorities. H.E. Nass emphasised the importance of integrating private-sector perspectives into research from the outset to ensure measurable and sustainable outcomes. The meeting was attended by Second Vice Chairman Mohamed Abdul Jabbar Al Koohji, Vice Treasurer Waleed Kanoo, and Board Members Yusuf Salahuddin and Sawsan Abu Al-Hasan. With Bahrain placing greater emphasis on innovation, data, and knowledge-based development, the Chamber’s business lab proposal may set a precedent for public-private research collaboration across the region.

Business labs are increasingly used by global institutions to convert research into policy prototypes and pilot-tested commercial strategies, bridging academia and enterprise.

Counselors Rewire Student Futures

New training aligns schools with labour data

● **100 school counselors trained**

● **Tools link school to jobs**

● **Labour trends guide guidance**

Mahir Haneef
TDT| Manama

A hundred career counsellors are at the centre of a quiet revolution in Bahrain’s education system, trained to turn labour data into student guidance in a first-of-its-kind collaboration between Skills Bahrain and the Ministry of Education. The initiative is designed to rewire the role of school advisors, shifting them from academic helpers to informed navigators of a fast-changing labour market. Armed with data-rich digital tools, these counsellors are now expected to guide students into sectors where real opportunities lie, using a national platform that maps emerging careers, skill requirements, and industry demand.



Tools for the future
The workshop, led by Skills Bahrain, an initiative under the Labour Fund (Tamkeen), introduced career advisors to a suite of new tools: Sector Skills Reports, Career Pathways Maps, and the National Occupational Standards. All are aimed at helping students make decisions based not just on interest, but on evolving job market realities. At the heart of this ecosystem is the Employability Skills Portal, developed in partnership with the Information & eGovernment Authority. The platform gives students, parents, employers,

and educators access to live insights on market needs and skills in demand, turning labour data into a shared compass for the next generation. **Classroom to economy**
Through a mix of demonstrations and group exercises, the workshop trained counsellors to embed these tools into daily practice, moving beyond generic advice to tailored guidance linked directly to national economic strategies. Assistant Undersecretary for Education H.E. Ibrahim Ali Al Burshaid praised the partners-



According to the International Labour Organization, countries that align career guidance with real-time job market data see up to 30% fewer mismatches between graduate skills and employer needs.

hip, calling it a key move toward transforming how schools prepare students for the workforce. “This initiative supports our strategic vision to integrate real-world career insight into the educational journey,” he said.

Bridge to Bahrain’s next workforce
Skills Bahrain Managing Director Amer Marhoon said the goal is to empower students with “accurate information that allows them to make informed

decisions,” and to ensure counsellors have the intelligence needed to support them. He noted that the initiative also marks a shift in how education policy is executed, with schools becoming active participants in shaping Bahrain’s labour supply in line with national goals. As Bahrain accelerates its transition to a data-driven, knowledge-based economy, guidance counsellors, once seen as sideline advisors, are being recast as frontline agents in the country’s workforce strategy.