

*“ASREN is a non-profit company with limited liability (GmbH) and is officially registered in Germany, under the umbrella of the League of Arab States. The main goal is to connect Arab institutions among themselves and to the globe through high-speed data-communications networks. Such networks will enable sharing and access to a variety of R&E services and applications in addition to utilization of highly sophisticated and technologically advanced computing resources available only at very few institutions in the world.”*

## Abu-Ghazaleh Calls for “Research for Innovation” during ASREN’s 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference (e-AGE21)



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Under the Patronage of Prof. Amr Ezzat Salama, Secretary General of the Association of Arab Universities and Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman of TAG.GLOBAL, the Arab States Research and education Network (ASREN) successfully conducted its 11th annual conference virtually during the period 13-15 December 2021, with the participation of more than 110 representatives from 44 countries.

The e-AGE21 offered a window for global collaboration by gathering more than 50 distinguished speakers and experts from across the research,

education and science communities around the world presenting and discussing issues on research and education infrastructures, NRENs developments and challenges, Science Cooperation, Open Science and Open Access, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Climate Actions, Earth Observation and more.

The e-AGE21 opening session was attended by a large number of high-level officials and representatives including; the League of Arab States, the Association of Arab Universities, Ministries of Higher Education of Oman, Palestine and Yemen, representatives from the European Commission (DG-RTD and DG-INTPA) and the Higher Council of Science and Technology in Jordan. Regional Research and Education Networks including GÉANT, WACREN, Ubuntunet Alliance, RedCLARA, and Internet2 were also present in addition to SESAME, NSRC and Internet Society. With focus on policy messages, the necessity of cooperation at the global level to support and facilitate research, education and science collaboration globally, were emphasized.

HE Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman of ASREN and TAG.GLOBAL emphasized the necessity of research for the purpose of innovation: “Today, after more than 10 years in existence, we are very proud of ASREN’s outstanding achievements in advancing the Arab e-Infrastructure towards enhancing education and advancing science and technology. In the coming years, we aspire to become a catalyst for innovation in the Arab region, by adopting the “Research for Innovation” approach and we will include it as a high priority in our future plans. And, we hereby call for the support and collaboration of the research and education leaders from around the world to make this vision a living reality.” Dr. Abu Ghazaleh said. He further acknowledged the role of the European Union in co-funding high-speed networks in the context of AFRICACONNECT and EUMEDCONNECT projects. “These projects were instrumental in the developments in our region”, he added.

HE Prof. Amr Salama, Secretary General of the Association of Arab Universities also emphasized the need for cooperation between national and regional organizations. He said: “Open Science and Open Educational Resources are essential for science, research, education and innovation. We must cooperate at all levels to support and promote open science initiatives in the Arab region by involving more stakeholders and establishing more partnerships between the Arab countries to encourage knowledge sharing”. He concluded by affirming that “the Association of Arab Universities and ASREN are working together to facilitate this cooperation to increase OS and OER accessibility in the entire Arab region.”

## AfricaConnect3 launches online photo contest with prizes! #iShareAC3



We are excited to announce that the AfricaConnect3 (AC3) Partners are launching AC3's first Twitter photo contest I share! Started as an opportunity to build a valuable repository of user-generated images, we hope that the contest will increase awareness of the project impact on the African Research & Education community and bolster affinity with our followers!

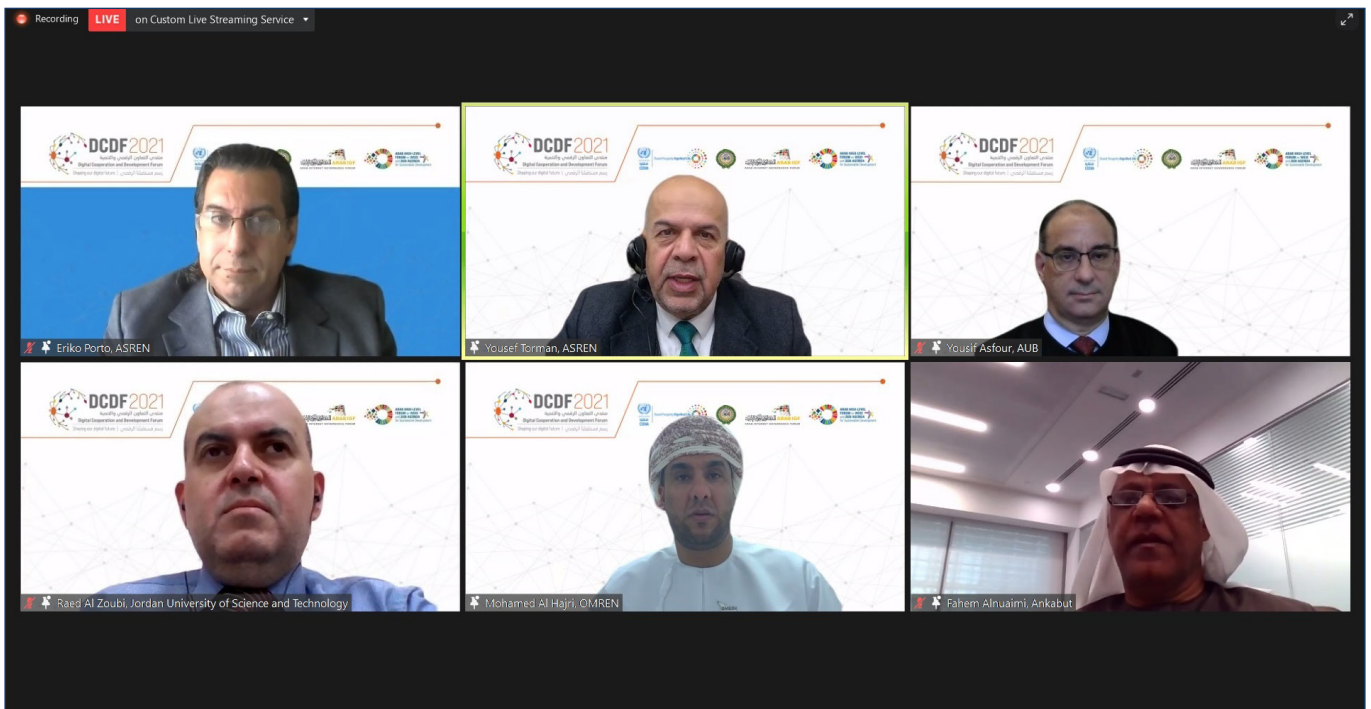
I share! targets our partner African NRENs and fellow users of AC3-supported research and education network services. We are looking for pictures representing: users, events, training, networks and infrastructure.

The Submission deadline for the contest is 11 February 2022. Don't forget to use the hashtag #iShareAC3 to be considered in the contest!

We will select 10 winners who will be awarded each with a gift basket containing AC3 – branded merchandise. Now is your time to share your picture and be seen!

More information and details about eligibility, submission conditions and prizes at the [AC3 website](#).

## ASREN featured at ESCWA's DCDF2021



The Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN) contributed to ESCWA's inaugural edition of the Arab International Digital Cooperation and Development Forum ([DCDF2021](#)) with a session on **“Digital Research and Education Infrastructure to Support Science and Achieve the UN-SDGs”** on 21 December 2021.

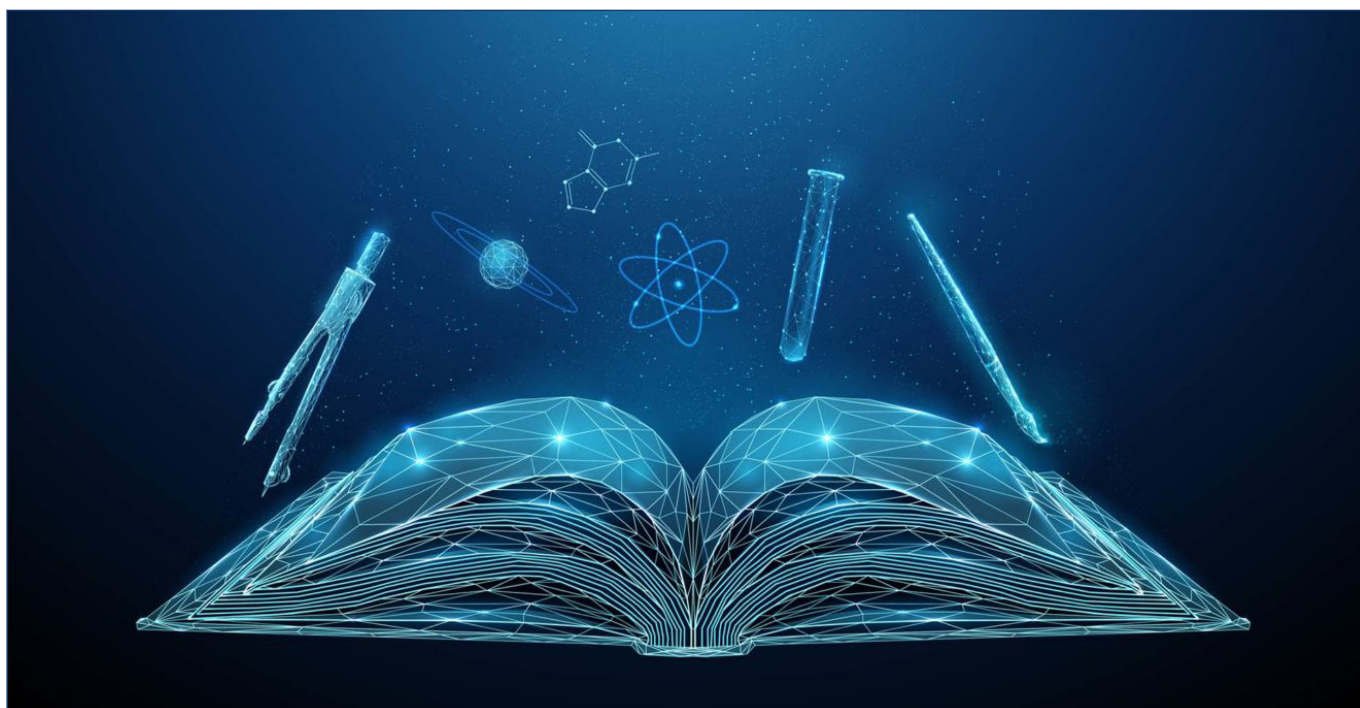
In addition to dedicated connectivity, NRENs and RRENs provide advanced services that enable and facilitate collaboration and include applications, tools and access mechanisms to the research and education communities. NRENs and RRENs are key elements in adopting “Open Science” and “Open Access” to support “Science” towards achieving the UN-SDGs.

The session featured 6 speakers from National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) across the Arab region presenting and discussing the research and education infrastructure and the role of National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) and Regional Research and Education Networks (RRENs) in supporting the developments of research and education in the Arab region and the way forward to better support these communities. The speakers also highlighted the challenges and obstacles facing these communities.

Find out more details on the session, presentation slides and session recording [HERE](#).



## NRENs' activities in support of Open Science



Open science is a growing priority worldwide. Big societal challenges, as climate change and global pandemics are demonstrating the urgency of a shift towards cross-border and cross-disciplinary scientific collaboration and are boosting the adoption of open science practices.

Now more than ever the vision is gaining momentum, as UNESCO's General Conference recently agreed on a first universal definition of Open Science and on [international standards and recommendations](#). In short, Open Science is (finally) set to become the new normal.

### How are NRENs contributing?

Research and Education Networks around the globe have an essential and increasingly important role in supporting Open Science. NRENs facilitate cooperation, enable research communities to organize, manage and share

research data with their peers and with the wider scientific community. They provide services to store data or to transfer files. They also engage in procurement frameworks to help institutions take up commercial services, like e-Lab notebooks, CRIS systems or repositories.

Additionally, NRENs offer training and promote best practices within the community, helping researchers better understand FAIR principles and engage in Open Science activities.

To showcase examples of NRENs' efforts in the field of Open Science, GÉANT collected a series of case studies within the community and made them available on the [GÉANT website](#).

Read more about the current success stories in the series [HERE](#).

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