



Arabian Cement Company Announces the Winners for its Second Round of “Khaleeha Suessi”

In collaboration with Nahdet El Mahrousa, seven start-ups from Suez to receive seed funding and needed guidance to launch their business models

Cairo, Egypt, 2 October, 2018 – Today, Arabian Cement Company (ACC) hosted a celebration to announce the winners of the second round of its social start-up program, Khaleeha Suessi. The program continues in partnership with Nahdet El Mahrousa (NM), the first incubator of early stage social enterprises in the Middle East and MENA region.

Since 2015, ACC and NM have been able to set a remarkable example for effective community involvement, by working hand in hand with eligible youth to help make their dreams come true. To date, over 135 hours of training and consultancy session have been offered to the selected projects out of over 150 applications submitted. This resulted in providing over 40 entrepreneurs from Suez with capacity building exercises and needed tools in different sectors including technology, energy, handicrafts, arts and culture, waste management, sustainable agriculture, training and employment, and education. With the closing of this round, Khaleeha Suessi will have had successfully supported 14 start-ups from Suez with seed funding and incubation services.

“This round of Khaleeha Suessi saw very interesting developments, as we worked hand in hand with Nahdet El Mahrousa to further develop the initiative and tailor it to respond to the needs of the Suez community. Based on our experience from the first round, we saw the need to commission a business opportunity mapping; to identify the most important sectors to focus on for this round; making the winning projects more relevant and sustainable,” said Sergio Alcantarilla, Chief Executive Officer of ACC. “At ACC, we believe that our contribution to the community to which we belong is part and parcel of our leading business model. As such, we are very proud with the progress and results of Khaleeha Suessi as a suitable program to empower youth.”

The seven winning start-ups include Art House, aiming to provide an art and culture hub to the people of Suez; Zoro'a, a sustainable agriculture





project offering organic food; Ecosolar, which produces fresh water using innovative solar power techniques; Heart Made, a T-shirt production unit offering trainings and jobs to women supporting their families; Baraka, producing high-quality organic fertilizers from organic waste; Dawana, a mobile application offering a local medicine and pharmacy data base for the people of Suez; and Family Care, a center offering medical and psychological care services to women and children of Suez. Moreover, an eighth start-up, Alafa, was granted the special committee award of receiving incubation services at NM. Alafa's concept is a unique one, as it offers the needed support to farmers to apply the latest agriculture techniques using safe fertilizers for optimized produce.

“One of the key outcomes of the Khaleeha Suessi program is showcasing successful entrepreneurs in Suez, who advocate for fostering a culture of social innovation in the city. For the past 15 years, Nahdet El Mahrousa has been playing a fundamental role in promoting social entrepreneurship and empowering young entrepreneurs in over 10 cities. Arabian Cement Company also plays a vital role in shedding the light on the importance of private sector engagement and support of social entrepreneurship in Egypt, and sends an invitation to the private sector to adopt the same approach towards a more inclusive economic growth in the country” Jackie Kameel Managing Director of NM.

The results of Khaleeha Suessi's first round, which kicked off in June 2015, were impressive. Seventy applications were initially received, with 15 out of which being shortlisted for the validation phase that included 42 hours of training on entrepreneurship offered to the 60 entrepreneurs involved. Following the validation phase, 6 start-ups were rewarded seed funding to establish their businesses, and were also offered 119 training hours and 60 hours of mentorship in total to help them build a sustainable business model. To date, the 6 selected start-ups have a total of 18 employees and worked with 3830 clients in their respective fields. Moreover, 3 out of the 6 winners were recognized as promising start-ups during the Entrepreneurship Conference that took place at the Syndicate of Engineering in Suez, while the other 3 received a grant to attend El Rehla's boot camp for entrepreneurship in Sinai.

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About Arabian Cement Company

Arabian Cement Company (ACC) was first established in 1997 by a group of Egyptian entrepreneurs, who aspired to establish a leading Egyptian cement company. The cement factory is located in the Suez Governorate. It produces five million tons of first quality cement, approximately 10% of Egypt's production. The company is a joint venture between Cementos La Union, a Spanish investor holding the majority of shares, and a group of Egyptian investors.

About Nahdet El Mahrousa

Nahdet el Mahrousa (NM) seeks to make a positive and lasting impact on Egypt's cultural, economic, and social development by activating and engaging young Egyptians. NM's flagship program, the "Incubator of Innovative Social Enterprises", leverages the ideas of high-potential change-makers, empowering them to act as a driving force for social innovation in Egypt. Since 2003, NM has incubated over 50 social enterprises—in fields such as job creation, education, scientific innovation, youth development, healthcare, and arts & culture. Last year alone we impacted 60,277 individuals in Egypt. At NM, we moreover take pride in being authentically Egyptian: founded, owned, and led by Egyptians. NM is an NGO registered with the Ministry of Social Solidarity. To learn more visit: www.nahdetelmahrousa.org

