

Ithra
Annual
Report

2022



Ithra.

Inspiring Hearts. Enriching Minds.

Ithra is a creative and cultural destination aiming to ignite cultural curiosity, expand knowledge and inspire creativity through the power of ideas, imagination and innovation.

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The King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture—known as Ithra, which means “enrichment” in Arabic—was created as a gift from Aramco to the Saudi people in honor of the company’s 75th anniversary. As the Kingdom’s leading cultural and creative destination for talent development and cross-cultural experiences, Ithra is a creativity platform where thinking ahead of the curve is the norm. In addition to programming for public audiences, Ithra offers a comprehensive support system for innovators navigating new paths in the arts, science and culture.

Situated in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia in the city of Dhahran, Ithra shares more than a geographic location with Dammam Well No.7, which is known as the Prosperity Well, since it was the first commercially viable oil well in Saudi Arabia: It also represents a landmark of new beginnings at a time of unparalleled societal growth. With the main building about 80,000 square meters in size, Ithra includes a museum with five diverse galleries, a theater, an idea lab, a cinema, a state-of-the-art library, the free-standing Energy Exhibit and the first children’s museum in Saudi Arabia. Ithra opened to the public in 2018.

Designed by the Norwegian architectural firm Snøhetta, the Ithra building appears as a collection of stones symbolizing unity, mutual support and diversity. Just as the location is symbolic, the building was designed with a purposeful expression of time, with the tower representing the future, the ground floor components standing for the present, and the underground components preserving and celebrating the past.

The Center’s architectural design combines some of the newest and oldest building technologies. Ithra is wrapped in steel tubes — 93,403 of them, totaling more than 360 kilometers if laid end to end – and it is the first building in the world to feature such cladding. On the other hand, the walls of the main interior space – the Plaza – are rammed earth, one of the most ancient construction techniques, and yet still excellent for acoustic, humidity and temperature insulation. Sustainability sits at the heart of Ithra, which achieved LEED Gold status – the leading international green building certification – for its construction. In 2018, the year Ithra opened to the public, TIME magazine ranked it as one “the world’s 100 greatest places to visit.”

WORLD OF INSPIRATION



Abdullah Al Rashid

Director, King Abdulaziz Center for
World Culture (Ithra)

As the King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra) marks the completion of five years of public operations, we continue on the unique journey of blazing a trail of cultural transformation in Saudi Arabia. Our role as a creativity and talent hub for forward-thinkers comes with great responsibility: to reveal the hidden cultural heritage of the Kingdom for the world while creating a path to an elevated future for the Saudi people. Our expectation-shattering record of a million visitors in 2022 tells a story of tapping into new opportunities, exploring success stories in the making, and embracing shared purpose for a brighter future.

Our growth in 2022 was exceptional across the board. Our Tanween creativity season, for example, the largest creative event in the region, hosted more than 62,000 visitors over 17 days. This year we rolled out Tanween under the theme "Collaborate to Create," in conjunction with our new Alsharqiya Gets Creative initiative. Launched this year under the generous patronage of HRH Prince Saud bin Nayef Al Saud – Governor of the Eastern Province, the initiative aims to further the Eastern Province as a beacon of creativity. These efforts resulted in Ithra's sponsorship of 540 creative community participation projects in cooperation with 300 entities from the public, private and non-profit sectors in cities across the province.

As for events, Ithra celebrated Eid Al-Fitr in 2022 with an integrated program that included more than 27 activities. Our first Saudi Founding Day celebration was an extremely popular fusion of poetry, art, singing and cinema that embodied our deeply rooted culture here in Saudi Arabia. We finished our national holidays and events by celebrating Saudi National Day through the Ithra-commissioned song "Let's Sing for Saudi," which won the Media Excellence Award for National Day 2022.

A particularly memorable experience on our 2022 calendar was Ithra's Hijrah Exhibit, brought to life here in Dhahran after years of hard work by

leading academics, specialists, consultants and curators. The state-of-the-art exhibition was the first of its kind in the world, in how it explored the birth and early days of Islam following the seminal narrative of the Prophet's ﷺ journey from Makkah to Madinah.

Ithra's international profile grew robustly in 2022. The Center participated in the Riyadh International Book Fair and the Frankfurt Book Fair. We were a significant presence at both the Red Sea International Film Festival and Cannes as well as the World Cup, where Ithra mounted a pioneering NFT exhibition. The Creative Solutions winning projects were featured in a high-profile showcase in London. Awareness about Ithra expanded with the help of an award-winning international brand re-launch campaign, which resulted in an unprecedented increase of visits.

In 2023, we are moving forward with growing momentum. As Saudi Arabia's creative and cultural sector reaches new heights, Ithra remains committed to realizing the ambitious Vision 2030 goals of fostering a sustainable creative future through a thriving knowledge economy for a vibrant, internationally engaged Saudi society. This commitment will not only take the creative and cultural sector to new levels, but will unfold additional areas of success for Saudi Arabia across industries, regions and geographical boundaries.

Vision

At Ithra, we envision a future in which **Saudi Arabia is a beacon for knowledge and creativity.**

Mission

Ithra aims to **make a tangible and positive impact on human development** by inspiring a passion for knowledge, creativity, and cross-cultural engagement for the future of the Kingdom.

The Five Pillars

At Ithra, we aim to make a sustainable **impact on our visitors while ensuring that we reach out with programming that will appeal to all segments of society.** Our offerings range from presenting the best international cultural programs to mounting ambitious projects to reshape our future. Our professional staff raises the industry bar and we continuously equip our volunteers with the skills they need to communicate and work effectively with our communities and audiences.

Everything we do revolves around five pillars: **art, knowledge, creativity, community and culture.**

Ithra Embracing Architecture

The Ithra Center is a unique architectural masterpiece, designed from the outset to be the most prominent cultural landmark in the Eastern Province. The first thing that the visitor notices is the high profile location of the Center on the Dhahran plateau. As Ithra offers incredible vision, it is also located at a poetic landmark: Saudi Arabia's first commercially viable oil well – the

Prosperity Well. As the Center pays tribute to the wealth brought forth by the discovery of oil, it is now representing a different source of energy: human energy. The levels of the building are arranged thematically and intended to suggest a progression through the ages. Areas dealing with history and the past are at the lowest levels, beneath ground level, and the ground floor deals with the present. The higher levels are mainly situated in the structure known as the Ithra Tower, with the idea that the knowledge communicated in the Tower's teaching rooms will equip citizens for the future.

It is the only building in the world whose structure combines stainless-steel pipe cladding in harmony with rammed earth, which functions as fire resistance, sound insulation and moisture control using natural compressed materials of sand, gravel, and clay, thereby combining the latest and oldest construction techniques. Visitors can relax while viewing Ithra's Lush Gardens. The Center's gardens are distinguished by local plants in dry soil, along with other species imported from Australia and the state of Arizona in the US that were chosen for their ability to grow in the desert.

As visitors approach, they will notice new exquisite details in the building that reflect a unique element. Mashrabiya's harken to the secrets of traditional regional architecture, as they allow cool air to enter a building. The design of the Ithra building utilized the mashrabiya system

both as an aesthetic element and to reduce energy consumption. The seven steel door sculptures in the Plaza also reflect decorative qualities of mashrabiya's and they add symbolic elements that enrich the imagination and give visitors a chance to value time, as the doors take into account the history of the development of human civilization: from the "Old Road Gate", with its primitive inscriptions that symbolize the stone age, to the "Gate of the Islamic Era", which bears geometric motifs derived from the masterpieces of Islamic art and architecture, and the "Gate of the Unification of the Kingdom", with its motifs inspired by the heritage of this nation and the authenticity of its popular symbols.

As visitors pass through the Great Hall, they can reflect on the thriving present as they experience its luxurious entrance, where major conferences and international forums are hosted. Visitors then pass through the Ithra Museum's downward sloping entrance that leads to five galleries. From the Plaza, they can ascend to the Library with its multiple levels and its illumination that expresses the light of a bright future achieved through knowledge. Back in the Plaza, visitors encounter an exquisite Iznik tile wall of pure black pierced by golden lines that creates an aesthetic symbolizing the idea of black gold, further reaffirming the connection of this architecture to the site on which it originated, and consolidating the vision of the Center toward meaningful creativity that will build a bright new future.

Ithra Components

Ithra's programming organization comprises nine separate components that synergistically work as one team to ensure that visitors of all ages enjoy a unique, inspiring and enriching experience.

المتحف Museum



صالات عرض المتحف
Museum Galleries

نبع الضياء
The Source of Light

متجر المتحف
Museum Store

Ithra Museum

The Ithra Museum is home to five galleries, dedicated to provide a journey of discovery through time. The Museum combines interactive exhibits, educational lectures and tours. Funoon Gallery focuses on international and Saudi contemporary art, the Ajyaal Gallery provides a voyage into Saudi's heritage, Kunooz Gallery discovers the beauty of Islamic design and history, the Rehlaat Gallery explores the diverse natural ecosystem and history of the Arabian Peninsula, and the Archive Gallery features highlights of Aramco history from the Archives.





Ithra Idea Lab



Ithra's Idea Lab is where ideas come to life. It is home-base to a creative community dedicated to inspiring innovation within the Kingdom. It mounts some of Ithra's highest profile programming, including Tanween and Creative Solutions. The Idea Lab's "Keystone" is an innovative space encompassing three floors where creators, innovators, designers and entrepreneurs can



develop their ideas and turn them into marketable models and products. The space includes a materials library, design galleries, 3D printers, meeting rooms and an amphitheater for project presentations. The Idea Lab also has an immersive lab within the Ithra Tower which offers access to cutting-edge XR technology and project support.

Ithra Theater



The Ithra Theater has established itself as Saudi Arabia's premiere theater program and venue for cross-cultural and multi-disciplinary productions. The 900-seat theater was built to – or above – the standards of a world-class opera house. Geared to



Saudi and international audiences, it is a platform for works that push creative boundaries across multiple disciplines of the performing arts as well as ceremonies, conferences and talks.

Ithra Cinema



Ithra's 300-seat cinema is a screening venue for Ithra's diverse public and professional audiences. The Cinema has a stage, so it is also used as an auditorium and performance venue. Ithra is now one of the Kingdom's leading independent

film production houses, and films produced by Ithra have been shown commercially, streamed on services such as Netflix and featured at film festivals such as Cannes and the Red Sea International Film Festival.

Ithra Great Hall



Ithra's 1,600 square meter Great Hall offers visitors a window to the world as it hosts traveling exhibitions, major events, conferences and installations designed to expand visitors' worldview with cross-cultural displays covering the arts, sciences, history and more in an

expansive and unique copper-lined space. A highlight of the 2022 Great Hall programming was the inaugural mounting of "The Hijrah Exhibition: In the Footsteps of the Prophet ﷺ" curated by the Ithra Museum and which will travel to other Saudi and international venues.

Ithra Tower



Soaring 18 stories into the sky, Ithra Tower houses a wide range of educational facilities from senate-style boardrooms and laboratories to multimedia resources, art studios and a state-of-the-art immersive lab. Topped by a flexible restaurant

space, the Tower hosts workshops and programs in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math), literature, media and creativity, where people across all age groups and interests can access skills-based programs.



Ithra Energy Exhibit



Ithra's ever-popular Energy Exhibit explores a world of discoveries in energy science through interactive displays, advanced technologies and multimedia. Established as a traveling exhibit in the 1950s by Saudi Aramco, the Energy Exhibit settled in its current location in the late 1980s,

when it was the only professional museum in the Eastern Province. It has evolved into a state-of-the-art facility that offers an exciting and engaging educational journey to explore how natural resources and alternative forms of energy are harnessed safely, efficiently and sustainably.

Ithra Library



Ithra Library is Saudi Arabia's first digitally integrated library. It is one of the largest public libraries in the region, with an ever-expanding collection of over 300,000 paper volumes in Arabic and English arranged across four floors. The Library also offers over one million audio and e-books. The Ithra Library hosts book signings

and special talks by prominent national and international guests, storytimes for children, literary competitions and oral history sessions. Ithra Library also runs the annual iRead national reading competition, a flagship Ithra program that has drawn more than 125,000 participants from all educational levels since 2013.

Ithra Children's Museum





The Ithra Children's Museum is the first museum in the Kingdom for children up to the age of 12 and their caregivers. Our youngest visitors are offered an array of exciting opportunities to enrich their lives through interactive play-based experiences, including exhibitions, classes and workshops. The Museum includes the Cave of Creative Stories,



a section dedicated to Islamic Arts and a hands-on environmental laboratory, in addition to the mezzanine floor, where young visitors up to the age of five years can play, learn and explore. The museum also hosts an array of educational programs for children, from workshops to seasonal camps and annual events.

Volunteer Community



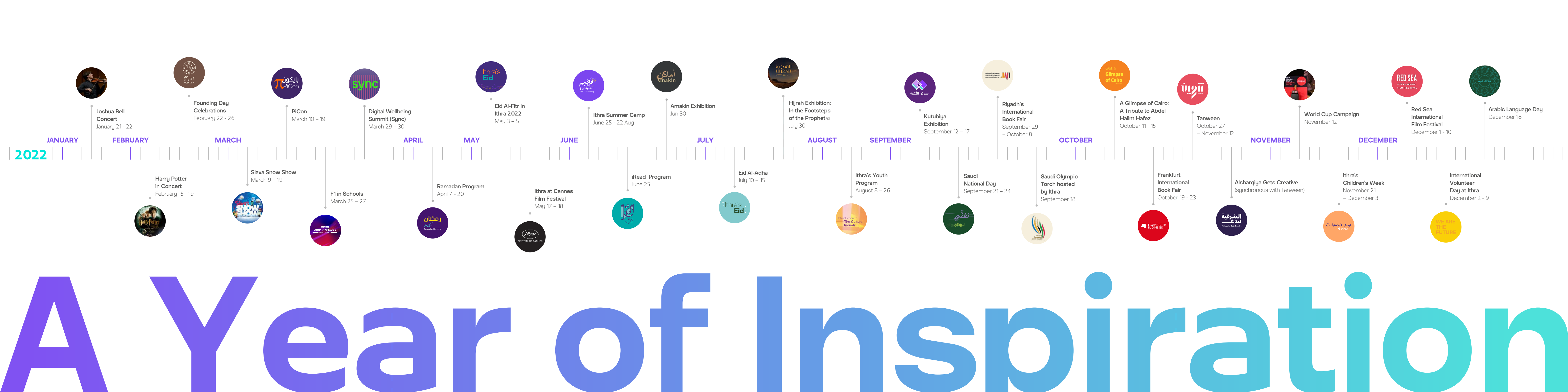


Volunteer Services at Ithra aims to develop a source of wealth represented by society and future generations, a trustworthy source of the nation's energy. The team has positioned Ithra as the leading platform in the Kingdom for volunteering by providing enriching volunteer opportunities for sharing information, skills

development and creativity. The Volunteer Services initiative aligns with Vision 2030, which includes the values of giving and compassion. In 2022, more than 4,000 volunteers generated over 160,000 volunteer hours. These hours played a significant role in the success of the Center's programs.

Into the year 2022

2022 was an extraordinarily successful year for Ithra as it witnessed the full return of live interactive programs compared to the pandemic-attenuated previous two years. Ithra's annual major events witnessed unprecedented growth in the number of participants and visitors. New programs were received with great anticipation and excellent turnout, while the projected attendance had a target of 700,000 visitors in 2022, more than one million people visited Ithra – a count that exceeded the target goal by 43%. Following is a series of short descriptions of the Center's major events along with a sample of new programs and initiatives of 2022.



Major Events

Ithra Content Initiative





The Ithra Content Initiative contributes to the development of the creative and cultural industries in Saudi Arabia by encouraging, empowering and inspiring Saudi creators to produce original Arabic content in various fields including written, visual and audio media. In 2022, 43 winners were selected and awarded grants amounting to 15,000,000 Saudi riyals. In December 2022, during the Content Enrichment

Ceremony at the King Abdullah Financial District in Riyadh, Ithra announced that it was launching the second edition and presented the completed projects from the first iteration of the initiative: The 2020 grants had 13 winners whose work resulted in 26 books, five readable projects, two audio projects, 20 documentaries, two children's projects and one musical album.

The Ithra Reading Program: iRead

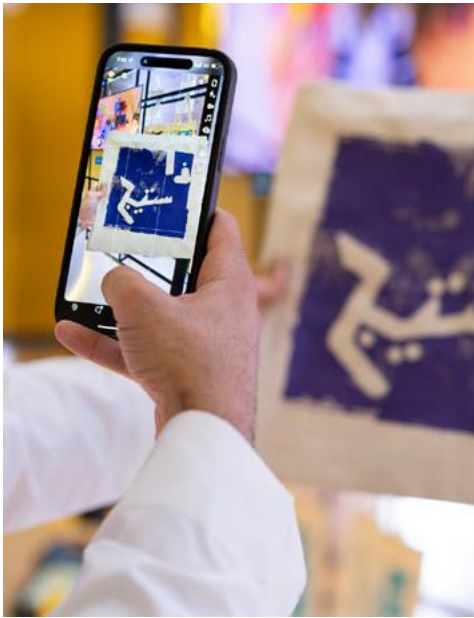


Now in its eighth year, the Ithra Reading Program – or iRead – is one of the flagship programs of the Center. The program aims to celebrate the love of reading among youth in Saudi Arabia and promote knowledge-seeking through various activities such as competitions and public enrichment events. It seeks to attract the involvement of the broader community as contestants, intellectuals and the general audience. It is designed to ignite a passion for reading and highlights the

importance of numerous literacy skills – reading, writing, speaking and sharing knowledge – to students, translators and public audiences. To date, the competition has attracted over 80,000 participants since its inaugural edition in 2013. iRead 2022 marked the last Saudi-only version of the competition: The Center announced at this year's closing ceremony that, starting with the next edition, the competition would be open to readers from all over the Arab world.

Tanween

The Center launched the fifth edition of the Tanween creativity season in 2022 under the theme "Collaborate to Create" and a focus on creativity, communication and architecture. The program hosted 27 speakers, 15 panel discussions, seven workshops, five professional courses, and 12 professional consulting sessions, presented by industry leaders in business, graphics and architecture, including Joe Foster, co-founder of Reebok, and Ramy Afifi, former designer at Apple and Nike. In addition, a panel discussion entitled "Football: The Great Game of Collobaration" was held in celebration of the World Cup and hosted by prominent speakers such as David Villa, the now-retired star of the Spanish national team and FC Barcelona. Tanween 2022 also presented 14 interactive experiences to more than 38,000 visitors, including the "INFERNO" experience, in which 350 visitors participated in Collobaration with machines that could, at times, control their movements.



Saudi Film Festival



In partnership with the Cinema Association and with the support of the Film Commission at the Ministry of Culture, the Center organized the ninth edition of the Saudi Film Festival held at Ithra from June 2 - 9 under the theme "Poetic Cinema." The 2022 agenda included the presentation of more than 90 films from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, in addition to five advanced workshops in filmmaking, a scenario development laboratory,



and signing events for 14 cinematic book releases. During the festival, Ithra also hosted a production market to connect production companies and filmmakers, resulting in the submission of more than 100 film projects and the signing of 35 commercial agreements—the value of which exceeded one million Saudi riyals. The festival sparked local and international interest which was reflected in the publication of at least 740 articles about the festival.





Creative Solutions



The Creative Solutions Program is an annual innovation program that aims to find practical solutions using XR technologies to selected immersive content challenges. Creatives in the fields of art, science and technology are encouraged to develop ideas and transform them into marketable models and products with the help of experts, consultants, mentors and trainers specializing in creativity and innovation. In 2022, 30 participants gathered at Ithra to

complete 15 masterclasses over eight weekends. The accompanying exhibition attracted more than 10,000 visitors. An international showcase of the finalists' work was presented in London to an exclusive group of industry leaders, including creative directors and CEOs of accelerators, investment and technology companies of all kinds, and directors of festivals, universities and the media.

Digital Wellbeing Summit (Sync)





In 2022, Ithra launched its first Digital Wellbeing Summit (Sync), which aims to promote the balanced use of technology to reduce negative impacts caused by new digital habits. From March 29 - 30, the summit hosted more than 60 high-level speakers from over 20 countries and welcomed more than 8,000 in-person visitors while over 39,000 watched the live broadcast. During the summit, the Sync team presented a varied slate of activities for Ithra

visitors to encourage them to reflect on their internet usage and increase their awareness of digital wellbeing. The Center also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology to work on related educational and awareness activities. The Ithra team also explored potential partnerships with a number of related international institutions.

Programs & Initiatives

Founding Day Celebrations



The first Saudi Founding Day Celebrations at Ithra took place in February 2022 and lasted for five days, attracting more than 60,000 visitors. The 20 featured programs included poetry, music and folkloric performances. Key programs included a camel caravan show in cooperation with the Camel Club, and Nabataean poetry evenings hosted by prominent poets such as



Nayef Saqr. The Ithra Cinema hosted a panel discussion titled "Tale of History" which shed light on the history of ancient Diriyah. The Center also offered families the chance to show off the best of traditional Saudi dress by inviting them to join the celebrations wearing their favorite authentic traditional costumes.



PiCon 2022



PiCon is an all-ages science event held annually as part of the Ithra Energy Exhibition's programming. It celebrates science through various exploration opportunities such as exhibits, immersive experiences, talks, discussion sessions, and programs that engage families, young adults



and science lovers. In 2022, the nine-day program included many new activities such as the luminous bike experience with about 300 participants, and the luminous running experiment which had over 1,000 participants.

Ramadan Program



During Ramadan, Ithra presented a wide range of programs inspired by the religious nature of the month and its historical significance. Ithra Cultural Majlis launched its fourth annual session with the theme of "Saudi coffee" through three panel discussions featuring experts and specialists. Ithra celebrated the traditional Ramadan Gargee'an program, aiming to provide a joyful, enriching



and engaging experience for more than 12,000 weekend visitors. Ithra volunteers also participated in three initiatives aimed at raising awareness about the importance of volunteering in our daily lives, such as Numu, a monthly session for Ithra volunteers that aims to present an inspiring topic in the field of knowledge exchange.

Eid Al-Fitr



Ithra celebrated Eid Al-Fitr by launching a diverse but integrated program that included more than 27 activities, ultimately attracting approximately 87,000 visitors to the Center. The Eid programs centered around three pillars: joy, family and nostalgia. The activities included musical performances by the Saudi artist Akram Al-Matar and the Bahrain Orchestra, a candy tree in the plaza, the archival exhibition "Eid and Lullaby,"



the Eid circus, musical marches, a kite-making workshop, an Eid photo studio, old film screenings and a shopping experience for local products at the Ithra Bazaar. A highlight of Ithra's Eid Al-Fitr efforts was the campaign to celebrate the release of a song for Eid by the singer Rasha Rizk. In 2022, the song "Itr we Sukkar" generated over 8.6 million views on social media channels.

F1 in Schools Program



The F1® in Schools program is a global educational program that aims to raise awareness of STEM among students around the world. In the first edition of the program in Saudi Arabia, presented by Ithra from January 20 to March 17, 25 students comprising five teams from schools from around the Kingdom participated in the national finals to



qualify for the World Championships. Combined, the students completed 3,000 hours of training. Of the final five, three teams were selected to study, design and build the Formula 1 prototype cars that were then presented July 10 - 14 in the UK, marking the first time that Saudi Arabia was represented in this international competition.

Joshua Bell in Concert at Ithra



Ithra hosted the famous Grammy Award-winning American violinist Joshua Bell for two evenings of performance in January. One of the most renowned violinists of this era, Bell's career has spanned four decades; and he is well-known for playing one of the most celebrated instruments in the world – the Gibson Stradivarius. Bell was

accompanied by the noted Italian pianist Alessio Bax, who has also performed all over the world. The Ithra Theater was filled to capacity and generated extensive media coverage, including interviews with the violin virtuoso in newspapers and leading TV channels.

Ithra Winter Camp



The Ithra Winter Camp program for children aims to develop their artistic skills by stimulating their imagination, supporting their talents and developing their critical thinking skills. The tenth session of the Ithra Winter Camp, which focused on developing art skills and self-expression, hosted 153 children between the ages of four and



12 years in three different tracks. Starting January 10th, the four-day program included organized excursions to stimulate children's senses, build their understanding of the outdoors and aesthetics, and explore uncommon materials in artistic creations.

Slava Snow Show



The award-winning Slava Snow Show, a joyous spectacle using interactive sound and visual effects, has inspired and delighted audiences around the globe for over 20 years. Ithra hosted



the Slava Snow Show for the second time, following its highly successful first run in 2018. In 2022, more than 10,000 people attended the program in the Ithra Theater.



Harry Potter in Concert



Ithra Theater hosted a suite of powerful live orchestral performances of one of the most beloved film series in history. "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets in Concert" was performed

by Italiana del Cinema, an Italian orchestra dedicated to the interpretation of soundtracks, led by maestro Timothy Henty. Held February 15 - 19, the Ithra Theater shows were completely sold out.

Eid Al-Adha



Ithra welcomed Eid Al-Adha with diverse artistic and cultural activities that attracted 64,916 visitors and 310 volunteers who completed 2,280 volunteer hours. Musical performances included a concert by the Kuwaiti singer Hammoud Al-Khader at Ithra Theater along with festive songs for the return of pilgrims from all over the Islamic world. The Eid programming included the interactive highlight Eid Big Moment, the



excitement of The Amazing Circus and the inspirational exhibition Eid and Lullabies. Ithra also hosted a library program titled "Beloved Bakkah", an art performance narrated by Tayf, who shares what she has learned from pilgrims from around the world. As well, the Lush Gardens hosted the Ithra Market that was inspired by the market kiosks of Makkah.



Amakin Exhibition



Amakin was a contemporary art exhibition featuring 28 international and regional artists. Curated by Dr. Vanessa Porter in partnership with the Saudi Art Council, the exhibition showcased

the notion of what "makan" (Arabic for "a sense of space") means to each of the artists through various mediums, including painting, textiles, artist books, film and old pamphlets.

Hijrah Exhibition: In the Footsteps of the Prophet



Ithra launched "The Hijrah Exhibition: In the Footsteps of the Prophet ﷺ" to highlight the Prophet's journey from Makkah to Madinah, the most important historical Islamic event. Ithra mounted the exhibition that was created in collaboration with a number of academics and historians over several years. The exhibition sheds light on many antiquities that were carefully



selected from the National Museum in Riyadh, the House of Islamic Arts, and the King Abdulaziz Complex for Waqf Libraries. The exhibition also features collective works created by specialists and artists who revived this journey through artworks, documentaries, and books that tell the story of the Hijrah.

Ithra's Youth Program



In 2022, Ithra initiated the first edition of its summer youth program titled "Introduction to Cultural Industry" on August 8. The program hosted 20 participants aged 13 - 18 years for three weeks, with the aim of broadening their knowledge of cultural industry professions. The program also provides the youth with an



opportunity to meet Ithra's experts and pioneers in the Kingdom's cultural industry fields and offers them a wide range of experiences tailored to develop their skills and knowledge. By the end of the program, three of the 20 participants are chosen to continue in three different Ithra projects for one year.

Book Fair & Reading Marathon



Ithra's Library mounted its second annual **Book Fair**, dedicated to exchanging books in line with Ithra's nation-wide reading program, iRead. The fair allows readers to benefit from their used books by exchanging them for others. The fair aims to encourage reading, knowledge exchange and awareness about the importance of recycling. The 2022 fair consisted of eight pavilions, including one dedicated for Saudi authors. During the event, there were three book signings at Ithra's Library, which were also part of the launch activities for the eighth edition of the iRead program.



In support of the "Saudi Green Initiative," the Ithra **Reading Marathon** was launched among three cities across the Kingdom. The Marathon began at the Ithra Library in Dhahran, moved to the King Fahad National Library in Riyadh, and finished at the iRead Library in Tabuk. Ithra planted a tree for every 100 pages read, achieving the goal of the marathon: 2,000 trees.

Saudi National Day



Ithra celebrated the 92nd Saudi National Day with more than 28 events focused on three pillars: celebration, unity and belonging. Ithra welcomed over 91,000 visitors of all ages and the events included theatrical and musical performances, traditional Saudi dances, a Saudi coffee experience, art workshops and interactive activities at the Children's Museum. The theme of this year's celebration was the national anthem, highlighting the diversity of music and folklore in the Kingdom and the role of national songs in



enhancing the sense of belonging and unity. Ithra also introduced a newly-commissioned song, "Naghanni Lilwatan" (Let's Sing for Saudi), which subsequently won the Media Excellence Award for the Saudi National Day presented by the Saudi Ministry of Media in 2022. The Center's social media campaign for National Day received 47 million views and had 142 million impressions, and garnered significant interaction and wide media coverage.

Saudi Olympic Torch hosted by Ithra



Ithra hosted the Saudi Olympic Torch as part of its tour throughout the Kingdom to announce the Saudi Games 2022, the largest national sports event in the history of the nation. To enhance the growth of the sports sector, the torch relay visited 57 landmarks of cultural, historical and civilizational

significance for which each region of the Kingdom is known – traveling 3,500 kilometers around the country over 22 days. After visiting Ithra, the torch was handed over to HRH Prince Ahmed bin Fahd, Deputy Governor of the Eastern Province, before heading to al-Hasa to continue its national tour.

A Glimpse of Cairo: A Tribute to Abdel Halim Hafez



Ithra hosted A Glimpse of Cairo featuring the cinematic concert "A Tribute to Abdel Halim Hafez." Over five days in October, more than 50,000 visitors took the opportunity to experience Egyptian culture, food and music at the Center. The events included a diverse range of activities in Ithra's Lush Gardens, Plaza, cinema and theater, which, in addition to performances of the concert, included food by Zooba – an Egyptian restaurant with a long-term location at Ithra – puppet



shows, a showcase installation of movie posters, a printing station, an Egyptian local food cart, a bazaar, a street performance group, and the Egyptian Takht band. The highlight was the Abdel Halim Hafez masterpieces concert on the Ithra Theater stage, presented and arranged by the Egyptian maestro Hisham Gabr, accompanied by Egyptian singers Mohammed Shawky and Noha Hafez and performed before videography by Amir Ramses.



Riyadh International Book Fair



The Riyadh International Book Fair is considered one of the largest and most prominent cultural events in the region. Ithra participated as a cultural partner with a special pavilion. The Ithra team received more than 12,000 visitors, including more



than 35 media guests. Ithra also participated in the cultural program of the book fair with a discussion session in the iRead forums, which hosted more than 120 participants. The fair ran from September 29 to October 8.



World Cup at Ithra



Ithra launched its own World Cup campaign on November 1, 2022 aimed at promoting awareness of the Ithra brand at the regional and global levels. On November 12, the actual FIFA World Cup trophy was at Ithra. To celebrate, Ithra held an event, "Football: The Great Game of Collaboration" which featured prominent speakers such as former Barcelona star and Spanish national team player David Villa, President of the Saudi Football Federation Yasser bin Hassan Al-Mis'hali, manager

and former Saudi international player Sami Al-Jaber, and General Manager of the 2022 FIFA World Cup at Coca-Cola, Nazli Berberoğlu. The session discussed success and failure stories in football and how the world's most popular game has inspired its audiences. The event was attended by 526 visitors, and the associated media campaign achieved more than 12 million views across social media platforms.

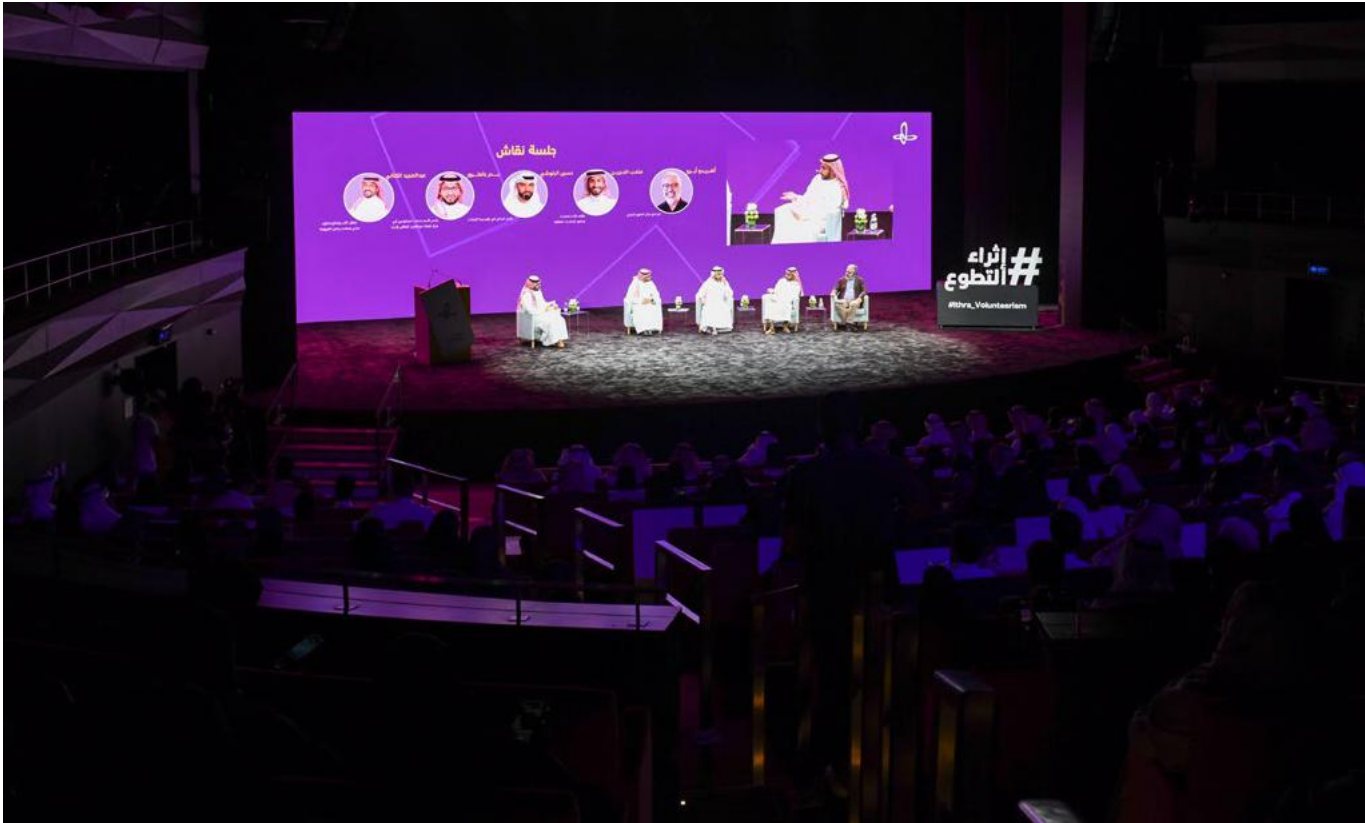
Alsharqiya Gets Creative



Ithra holds the annual Alsharqiya Gets Creative initiative in conjunction with the Tanween Creativity Season. The program aims to support the creative economy of the Kingdom – specifically the Eastern Province/Alsharqiya – to further Ithra's role as a development platform for talent and creativity. The initiative seeks as well as to position the Eastern Province as the capital of creativity in the Kingdom, through

creative initiatives and programs held in 10 cities throughout the province. The third edition of Alsharqiya Gets Creative was a huge success, garnering great participation and interest from the public and the media. The program included more than 540 creative events, with the participation of 300 entities from various cultural, creative and entrepreneurial sectors, compared to 40 entities in 2020, and 150 entities in 2021.

International Volunteer Day at Ithra



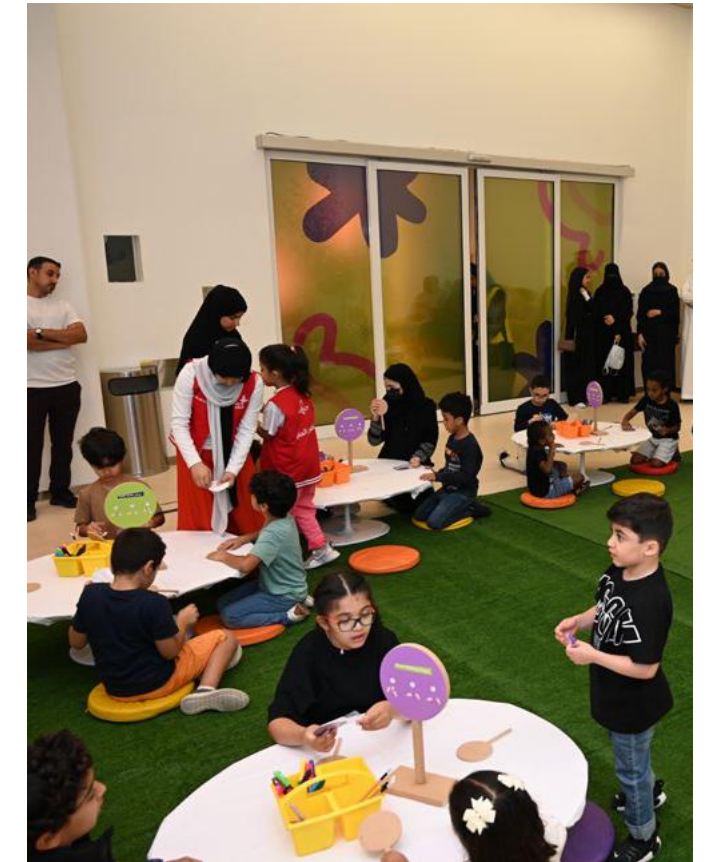
International Volunteer Day is a global occasion aimed at promoting and spreading the culture of volunteering. The Center celebrated this day through the Ithra Volunteer Day event, which aims to raise awareness among young people about the importance of volunteer work, clarify its great benefits to individuals and society, and appreciate the contributions of volunteers in achieving sustainable development goals. As part of the

event, the Ithra Theater hosted the Ithra Volunteer Forum on December 3 under the theme "We are the Future." The forum's discussion followed the experiences of inspiring individuals who have made their mark in volunteer work, such as media presenter Mufeed Al-Nuwaier. The winners of the Ithra Volunteer Award were also announced during the forum, which attracted about 650 participants.

Children's Week



The world celebrates International Children's Day annually to increase awareness of children's rights, care for their well-being, and develop their abilities and talents. Ithra celebrated this year by offering a series of 14 activities, including museum shows for children, fun play experiences, and the Family Cultural Maze, where families were challenged to solve puzzles and learn together about art



and culture. Children's Week programs also featured storytelling, book signings and more. The event, which aims to promote global teamwork, empower young volunteers to excel, and offer fun educational programs based on games, ran from November 21 to December 3, during which time the Center hosted 83,640 visitors.

Red Sea International Film Festival



Ithra headed to the 2022 Red Sea International Film Festival held in Jiddah with its latest film, "Tariq Alwadi". On December 8, the Ithra team presented to more than 15 international media outlets to promote the film. Ithra participated in the festival's production market to introduce projects and initiatives that support the film and



content industry in the Kingdom, promote Ithra as a cinematic production house and meet with local and international talents. The Creative Solutions program team also participated in a special booth to highlight its immersive media winners – the finished products of the top five projects from the program's first year.

2022 in Numbers

1,000,000
Visitors

190
VIP Visits

6%
Increase in local brand
awareness for Ithra

6%
Increase in awareness
of the Ithra logo

39,105,500
Social media engagements

1,300,000
Social media followers

4,000
Volunteers

160,000
Volunteer hours

Success and Partnerships

To address the obstacles and challenges facing the world today, Ithra believes in the need for cooperation, knowledge sharing, and exchanging ideas in order to promote cultural and civilizational communication with the rest of the world, exploring new sources of energy and human potential, inspiring people, satisfying curiosity and supporting innovation. As a result of these efforts, Ithra has won awards and accolades that have documented its successes and how the Center's leadership is driving change in the Kingdom and enhancing its global presence.



Awards & Recognitions

MarCom Awards

In one of the largest creative competitions in the world, Ithra received five high-level awards from MarCom, a top tier international entity specializing in honoring the best works in marketing and communication. The global creative competition – which, in 2022 included around 6,000 participants from different parts of the world – Ithra won Platinum awards, the highest, in the annual report category and for Ithraeyat magazine. For its nominated productions, Ithra Studios won three Gold awards and two honorable mentions.

Ithraeyat Awards

Ithraeyat Magazine was presented the Website of the Day award by The Web Awards for its "excellence in quality, originality, design and content." Ithraeyat also received a top-level Platinum MarCom Award in the E-Magazine category. As well, the magazine earned Honorable Mention by the prestigious Awwwards after receiving high scores from the jury and the public for its content and design. Launched in 2020, it is the first high-end award-winning magazine in Saudi Arabia dedicated to art and the culture surrounding art, and it is quickly becoming the reference point for those interested in Saudi and Arab art and artists. Bilingual, with over 100,000 visitors reading its digital version, the magazine has featured more than 500 artists in its 20+ issues.

Media Excellence Award

The Center won the 2022 Media Excellence Award for the national song category for the Ithra-commissioned "Naghanni Lilwatan" (Let's Sing for Saudi) which gained wide popularity. The Media Excellence Award is an annual award inaugurated by the Saudi Ministry of Media in 2019 to honor creative media works in various fields that address the homeland as a subject during Saudi National Day celebrations. In 2022, there were 1,000 submissions competing for the award in nine media categories.

Hyyak Certificate for Ithra

Ithra received the Saudi quality certificate Hyyak in 2022, presented by the Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization, making it the first institution that welcomes guests and visitors to receive this accreditation in the Eastern Province. Hyyak is a quality mark certification for beneficiary service centers that aim to contribute to achieving beneficiary satisfaction, enhancing the quality of reception and services provided to beneficiaries, promoting professional dealings with beneficiaries, and increasing competition among centers to obtain a certificate that recognizes their excellence in service.

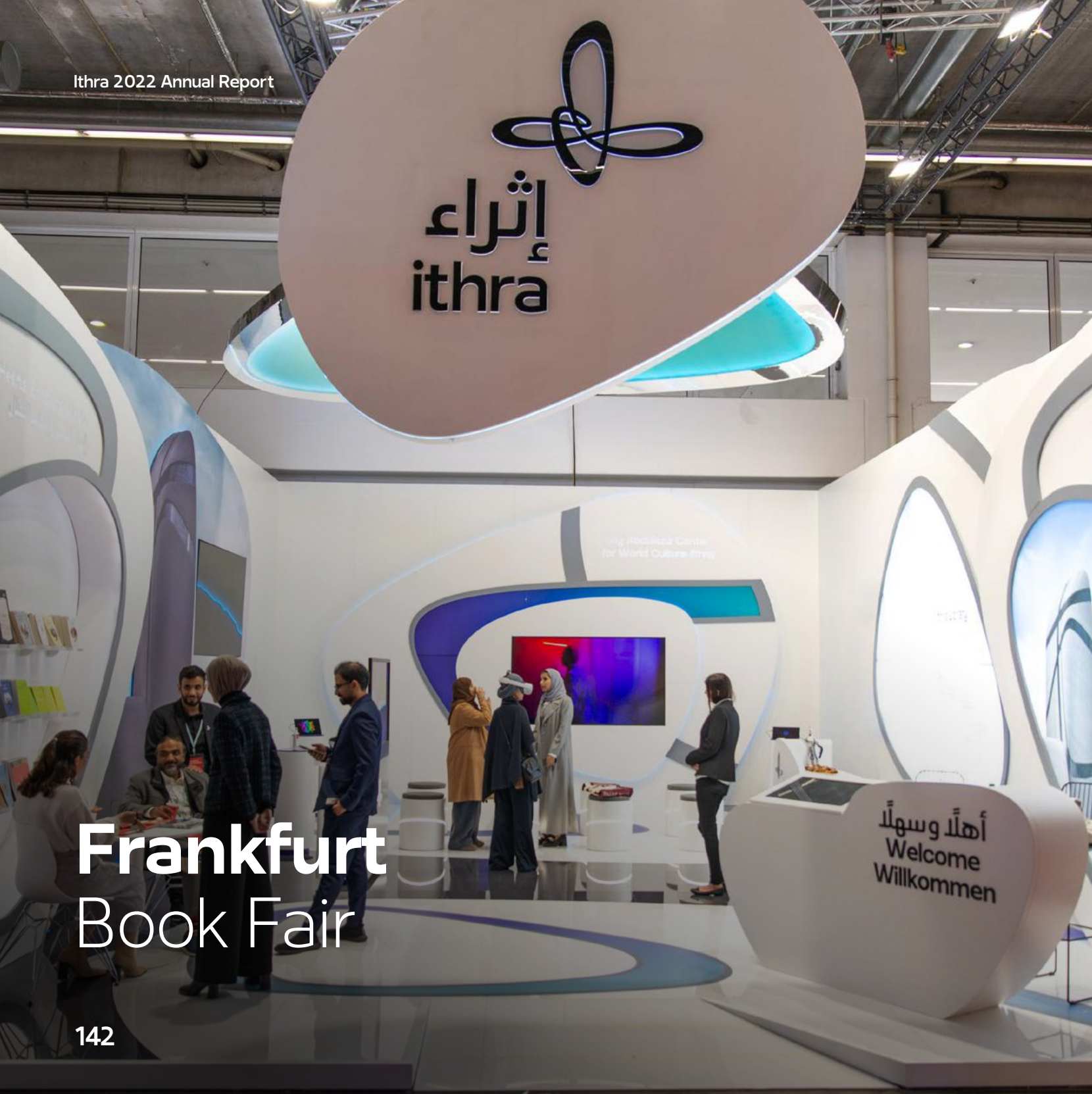
Partnerships & Collaborations

- Saudi Cinema Society
- Sana Tourism Company / Saudi Cruise
- Cultural Support Fund
- Ministry of Culture: Fashion Commission
- Ministry of Culture: Literature, Publishing and Translation Commission
- Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
- Retal Urban Development Company
- Royal Commission for AlUla province
- Saudi Arabian Federation for Electronic and Intellectual Sports
- Saudia Airlines

Ithra's International Presence

More than any other year, in 2022 Ithra reached different parts of the world through awards, regional and international partnerships, and recognition that further enhances the awareness of Ithra. The Center's international presence included: the World Cup campaign in Qatar, the Frankfurt Book Fair, the Creative Solutions Showcase in London, and the Cannes Film Festival. Ithra has also successfully attracted media attention from various parts of the world for its programs, initiatives, conferences and global events, including extensive media coverage from well-known newspapers, networks and platforms such as The National, BBC, Financial Times and CNN among many others.





Frankfurt Book Fair



After success at the national level at the Riyadh Book Fair, Ithra participated for the first time in the Frankfurt Book Fair, the largest and commercially most important book fair in the world. The 2022 edition was held October 19 - 23. The Fair's programming included an Ithra-organized panel discussion titled "The Status of Arabic Literature



in the World" at the Frankfurt Studio. Ithra's fair booth provided visitors with a virtual reality tour of the Ithra Library, to highlight it as a leading cultural destination for knowledge and literature with diverse programs and holdings and to position the Ithra Library among its global counterparts.

Ithra at Cannes Film Festival



Ithra participated in the 2022 Cannes Film Festival, which was held from May 17 - 28 in the Saudi pavilion led by the Saudi Film Authority. Ithra presented two short films: "An Old Phone Number" by Saudi director Ali Saeed, and "Swing" by Saudi director Raneem Al Mohandes, which received

wide media coverage. In addition, the head of the Performing Arts Unit at Ithra contributed to a number of seminars to highlight Ithra's role in the Saudi film industry as the most prolific production house and host of the Saudi Film Festival, which is held annually at Ithra.



iRead
Talks



iRead Talks is a series of cultural events held in a number of Arab capitals, including Riyadh, Muscat, Cairo, Rabat and Amman as part of Ithra's reading enrichment program, iRead. The goal of the program is to promote reading culture in the

Arab world through lectures, workshops and panel discussions that bring writers, authors, thought leaders and readers from various fields onto a single platform to discuss reading, writing and related topics.

Getting it **Done.**

