



UK Science
& Innovation
Network



UK Science & Innovation Network Country Snapshot:

Oman

Position in Global
Innovation Index:

Oman: 76

UK position in Global
Innovation Index:

4

Economic, Science and Innovation Landscape in Oman

(Global R&D and innovation rankings from GII 2021)

The Sultanate of Oman is an Arab country on the southeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula, placing it in a strategic geographic position at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. It is the oldest independent state in the Arab world, and the capital, Muscat, has a population of 1.72 million.

Oman has invested heavily in education and research since the 1970s. As a consequence, the literacy rate has risen to 96.11% and the first University, Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), opened in 1986. Sohar University was subsequently established in 2001, along with other higher education institutions including the University of Nizwa, one of the fastest growing in Oman; Dhofar University; and the Higher College of Technology with six colleges of applied sciences.

The Oman National Vision 2040, which alongside the Oman National Research Strategy (2020 - 2040) and The Oman National Innovation Strategy, set out the ambition and direction Oman will take as it seeks to be among the top 20 most innovative counties in the world by 2040.

There are four pillars that will support the delivery of these strategies:

- Economic Diversification
- Intellectual Property & Knowledge Transfer
- Institutional & Social integration
- Human Capital

Thus research, development, innovation and education are seen as key to the development and delivery of the boarder Omani national vision.

The role of administrating national research funding calls sits with The Oman Research Council. TAhis includes funding calls announced both for individual researchvher, as well strategic programmes designed for instituions. All calls are established to support Oman's priority sectors.

The vision for Oman set out by The Research Council is for:

- Oman to become a regional hub for innovation, and a leader in producing new ideas, products and services
- Oman to have the largest research capacity in the region
- Omani research to excel in selected fields of national importance

www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/uk-science-and-innovation-network



- Oman to have a research culture that responds swiftly to local social and economic needs
- Oman to have a world-class infrastructure for evidence-based policy making

The key objectives of The Research Council to help implement this vision are:

- Building Research Capacity Mechanisms
- Achieving Research Excellence
- Building Knowledge Transfer and Value Capture
- Provide an Enabling Environment for Research and Innovation

Oman also established TANFEEDH; the national programme for establishing economic diversification which prioritised Manufacturing, Tourism, Transport & Logistics, Mining and Fisheries, in order to diversify the national income resources and fulfill the objectives of the ninth five year development plan 2016-2020. The strategic direction for the programme was:

1. Increase the contribution of the targeted economic sectors (tourism, manufacturing, and logistics) to the Sultanate's GDP from 4.9 billion Omani Riyals in 2015 to 6.6 billion Omani Riyals by the end of 2020.
2. Ensure no less than 80% of the labs' initiatives and projects are funded from sources other than government investment.
3. Create at least 30,000 job opportunities for Omanis through Tanfeedh Program initiatives.

UK Science and Innovation in Oman

In **Oman** there are niche R&D partnership opportunities. Oman currently spends 0.22% of GDP on R&D, and while initially concentrating primarily on health, water and arid agriculture, priorities have expanded in recent years in an effort to support wider economic diversification. Sultan Qaboos University is the most active research institution in the country, along with the Middle Eastern Desalination Research Centre (MEDRC) - an international organisation which concentrate on research, training, knowledge exchange and capacity building related to fresh water scarcity - and Sohar University.



In September 2017, the University of Sheffield Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) launched a manufacturing research centre with Oman as part of Sohar University. The centre will focus on advanced machining, specialist assembly, material development, optimised design, rapid prototyping and engineering testing to support the strategic development in the supply chains of the aluminium, steel, composites and polymer industries.

SIN Gulf Contacts

Email: SIN.Gulf@fco.gov.uk

Head of UK Science and Innovation Network (Gulf)

Nick Boucher: Nicholas.Boucher@fco.gov.uk

Tel: +974 4496 2057

Mobile: +974 3375 9387

Twitter: @UKSINet; @UKinOman

The information in this document is believed correct at the time of distribution. However, HM Government accepts no liability for any loss or damage incurred as a result of any inaccuracies, howsoever caused.