



AUIB
الجامعة الأمريكية في بغداد

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The American University of Iraq – Baghdad & Gallup

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

The American University of Iraq – Baghdad and Gallup Launch First National Leadership Institute in Iraq

A new, permanent institution — built through global expertise, rooted in Iraqi aspirations, delivered in Arabic, and designed to develop the leaders who will shape Iraq's future for generations to come.

BAGHDAD & LONDON — July 08, 2026 — The American University of Iraq – Baghdad (AUIB) and Gallup established a long-term partnership to start Iraq's first National Leadership Institute — a permanent center of excellence dedicated to developing the leaders of the country's ministries, public institutions, and private-sector enterprises.

The partnership builds on a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two institutions in London on June 10, and also establishes a new research center at AUIB that will bring Gallup's globally recognized expertise in opinion research, analytics, leadership science, training methodologies, and institutional assessment to Iraq.

KEY FACTS

- **What:** A permanent National Leadership Institute at AUIB, plus a new affiliated research center, created through an AUIB–Gallup partnership.
- **Initial focus:** Public-sector leaders — directors-general, deputy ministers, and senior civil servants — with private-sector programs to follow.
- **Scale:** Designed to grow toward training hundreds of leaders annually as the Institute reaches full operation, with initial cohort sizes to be announced.
- **Delivery:** Programs delivered primarily in Arabic, based at AUIB in Baghdad.
- **Milestone:** MOU signed in London on June 10, 2026, by AUIB Founder Dr. Saadi Saihood and Gallup Chairman Jim Clifton.



Leaders of the American University of Iraq–Baghdad and Gallup following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Gallup's London headquarters, UK.

At its core, the initiative reflects a shared belief held by both institutions: that Iraq's future will be shaped by the quality of its leadership and by the strength of the institutions that develop it.

The Leadership Institute is envisioned not as a temporary program or a short-term engagement, but as an enduring national institution dedicated to cultivating capable, ethical, and forward-looking leaders across Iraq's public and private sectors. Through world-class leadership development programs, applied research, executive education, coaching, and institutional partnerships, the Institute will help prepare a new generation of directors-general, deputy ministers, public servants, executives, entrepreneurs, and future national leaders equipped to guide Iraq through the opportunities and challenges of the twenty-first century.

The Institute's initial focus will be on strengthening leadership within Iraq's public sector, recognizing the critical role that government leaders play in advancing national development, institutional effectiveness, and public trust. Programs will be delivered primarily in Arabic, based at AUIB, and designed around Iraq's unique context and priorities. Over time, the Institute will expand its offerings to support entrepreneurs, business executives, and private-sector leaders whose innovation and enterprise are essential to Iraq's long-term economic prosperity.

From its inception, the Leadership Institute will be built through a collaborative partnership between Gallup and AUIB. Together, the two institutions will co-design programs, develop curriculum, establish quality standards, conduct research, prepare faculty, and cultivate leadership coaches capable of delivering transformative learning experiences. This collaborative model reflects the shared commitment of both institutions to building something greater than a program: a sustainable leadership ecosystem for Iraq.

“Iraq has never lacked talent, ambition, or courage. What every nation needs is a place to grow its own leaders. We are honored to partner with AUIB in building that place and in helping establish an

institution that can serve Iraq for generations to come..” — Jim Clifton, Chairman, Gallup

“For too long, Iraq’s most capable people were told their futures lay elsewhere. Through this partnership, we are creating an institution dedicated to developing leaders here in Iraq, for Iraq. This is more than an institute. It is a national investment in human potential and a promise to future generations that the leadership needed to build Iraq’s future can and will be developed on Iraqi soil.— Dr. Saadi Saihood, Founder, American University of Iraq – Baghdad

Gallup brings nearly a century of global leadership research, analytics, and strengths-based development expertise. AUIB brings a deep commitment to Iraq's future, an institutional platform dedicated to national development, and a mission centered on investing in Iraqi talent and capability. Together, they will combine international excellence with local relevance to create a leadership institution capable of serving Iraq for decades to come. The long-term vision of the partnership is not simply to develop leaders, but to develop the national capacity to continuously produce leaders. Through joint delivery, faculty development, coaching certification, research collaboration, and institutional knowledge transfer, the Leadership Institute will cultivate an expanding network of Iraqi educators, coaches, researchers, and practitioners who will carry the mission forward across generations.

In this sense, the Institute represents both a global partnership and a national investment. It is built jointly through international collaboration while remaining firmly anchored in Iraq's aspirations, institutions, and people. The initiative reflects a shared commitment by AUIB and Gallup to Iraq's long-term institutional development and to constructive cooperation between Iraq and the United States in education, leadership, research, and human-capital development. Both institutions envision the Leadership Institute becoming a national model of leadership excellence and a catalyst for strengthening the leadership capacity of Iraq's public and private sectors. The Leadership Institute ultimately represents a shared vision: combining global leadership science with Iraqi determination, international expertise with national ownership, and institutional excellence with a long-term commitment to the people of Iraq.

Its greatest success will not simply be measured by the leaders it trains, but by the enduring leadership ecosystem it helps establish; one capable of continuously developing Iraqi leaders, strengthening Iraqi institutions, and advancing Iraq's future for generations to come.

ABOUT AUIB

The American University of Iraq – Baghdad (AUIB) is a private, not-for-profit university located in Baghdad, Iraq, and established in 2021. AUIB offers liberal arts-based education modeled on American higher education standards, with English as the language of instruction. The university provides both undergraduate and graduate programs. AUIB's mission is to play a role in the rebuilding of the country's civil society and economy.

ABOUT GALLUP

Gallup delivers analytics and advice to help leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 90 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of the world's constituents than any other organization.

MEDIA CONTACTS

AUIB: marcom@auib.edu.iq

Gallup: mediainquiry@gallup.com