



**AMERICAN  
UNIVERSITY  
OF BEIRUT**

**OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **AUB hosts the First National Research Day of Lebanese medical schools**

On April 27, 2024, the American University of Beirut (AUB) welcomed Lebanon's medical community to the First National Research Day. This event is a joint effort by eight medical schools in Lebanon, including the American University of Beirut, Beirut Arab University, Lebanese American University, Lebanese University, Saint George University of Beirut, University of Balamand, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, and Saint Joseph University of Beirut. The event marked a milestone in medical research collaboration.

Key Lebanese officials participated in the event, including Caretaker Minister of Public Health Firass Abiad and Minister of Education and Higher Education Abbas Halabi. AUB leadership was represented by President Fadlo R. Khuri, Vice President for Medical Affairs and Raja N. Khuri Dean of Medicine Raymond Sawaya, Associate Dean for Clinical Research Elie Akl, and Director of the Clinical Research Institute Marlene Chakhtoura.

Over 500 attendees participated in the event, including faculty members from various universities, mentors, medical students, staff, and others. Initially, 329 abstracts were submitted for consideration. A team of 27 abstract reviewers from all medical schools assessed each submission. In the end, 202 abstracts were accepted: 64 for oral presentations and 138 for poster presentations.

The Clinical Research Institute (CRI) at AUB initiated more than a year ago efforts to increase national collaboration on clinical research. At the invitation of VP/Dean Raymond Sawaya, the deans of all medical schools in Lebanon met on May 31, 2023, to discuss potential collaborations. The primary outcome of this meeting was the decision to establish a National Research Day, aimed at fostering collaboration among Lebanon's medical schools. Each dean appointed representatives to a scientific committee, coordinated by the CRI, to organize the event. Dr. Elie Akl served as the chair of this scientific committee. During National Research Day, a follow-up meeting was held for the deans to evaluate ongoing collaborations and discuss the progress made since their initial meeting. This event provided a crucial platform for the deans to plan further collaborative initiatives.

AUB President Fadlo R. Khuri asserted the transformative power of research in medicine, stating, "Medicine is the field about knowing science, about constant renewal, and about participating in research," as he thanked the clinical research team at AUB for their ongoing efforts. He noted, "I'm really delighted to see so many bright young minds putting forth their best research projects... It is a very important concept: that what makes Lebanon good and what can make it great is the sense of integration, diversity, and collaboration."

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This collaborative effort is set to have a profound impact on student outcomes. By leveraging shared resources and expertise, the collaboration will enhance capacity building, foster collaboration opportunities in research projects, and facilitate networking and mentorship. Moreover, this initiative holds the potential to advance research knowledge across Lebanon significantly. It aims to map clinical research institutions, establish national support for clinical practice guidelines, share resources, form multicenter research teams, attract larger funding opportunities, increase research productivity and quality, address pressing clinical needs, and collectively tackle common research challenges at the national level.

The event concluded with an award ceremony to honor the highest-scoring presentations, recognizing excellent research projects both across institutions and within them. A total of 36 awards were distributed.

## ENDS

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### **Note to Editors**

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 750 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 8000 students. AUB currently offers more than 120 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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