



Figure 1: IECHE 2014: L: OSU Booth - Bob Eckhart, Sultana Nahar, Laura Fernandez. M: Nahar Meeting with Minister of Higher Education Dr. Al Anqari, R: IECHE interview of Bob

## International Exhibitions and Conference on Higher Education (IECHE)

### Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, April 15-18, 2014

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Prof Laura Fernandez<sup>2</sup>, Prof Robert Eckhart<sup>3</sup>**

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## 1 OSU AT IECHE

This is the report of OSU delegation, providing information of university programs to prospective students to meeting the Minister of Higher Education Dr. Al Anqari, at IECHE 2014 in Saudi Arabia. For the last five years, the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) of Saudi Arabia has been holding the International Exhibitions and Conference of Higher Education (IECHE) in Riyadh. It was participated by 440 universities from various countries, such as, Australia, China, European counties, India, Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia and other Asian countires, including those in Saudi Arabia. USA had the most prominent presence in IECHE 2014 by participation, such as, of 108 institutions. The universities exhibit their academic programs and features in booths. They can also buy workshop times to present certain programs. MOHE invites and supports fully the delegates of quite a number of universities which includes OSU. We delegated OSU with some division of tasks: Professor Laura Fernandez of Moritz College of Law for undergraduate admissions and law school, Director Robert Eckhart of Combined ESL Programs for English learning and programs, Dr. Sultana N. Nahar of Astronomy Department for graduate admissions and other special programs as well as lead the delegates. I would also like to give grateful thanks to Dr. Salim Al-Malik, the General Director for International Affairs of MOHE, for being patient and all help he gave me from the beginning to throughout the process of our attending IECHE.



Figure 2: OSU Booth at IECHE: L: Laura and Sultana with prospective students.

**Laura's comment:** "As per the invitation of the university, the Moritz College of Law continued its legacy of being present at the conference and representing OSU as a whole at the fair this year. Saudi Arabian applicants represent the second largest group of applicants from a single country to the Moritz College of Law Master of Laws (LL.M.) program."

However, networking was the other most important achievement we had. In addition to providing information on studying at OSU, each of us did considerable networking with the MOHE, deans or high ranking officials, professors of Saudi universities, with OSU alumni in Saudi Arabia and others.

## 2 BOOTH ACTIVITIES

US booths had the largest crowd compared to other countries, such as, Australian, China, India, Japan, and other Asian and European countries. Among other US booths, we had one of the busiest ones at IECHE. Most queries on admission requirements, scores, university ranking were for

- 1) Architecture,
- 2) Bioinformatics.
- 3) Business management,
- 4) Computer Science,
- 5) Conditional admissions to various department,
- 6) Economics,
- 7) Engineering - Computer, Electrical, Mechanical,
- 8) Law,
- 9) Linguistics
- 10) Nursing,
- 11) Nutrition,
- 12) On-line or distant learning courses for degrees
- 13) Optometry
- 14) Pharmacy
- 15) Public Health



Figure 3: L: President of King Abdul Aziz University, Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Khaled Al Anqari, Sultana. R: Dr. Al Anqari giving Sultana gift of box of MOHE information.

- 16) Medical residency and USMLE
- 17) Pre and post-doctoral research exchange program
- 18) Teaching trainings

There were also queries about flying lessons, digital media, and living arrangements. Bob used his laptop to give more information.

**Bob's report:** "Prospective Student Relations: I sent 100+ weblinks to students I met with, directly from the websites of the programs they are most interested in. My strategy was to help them visit the webpage of the program they were interested in and then send the page to them so they not only had the page (without having to find it themselves) but they also had my email address if they wanted to ask follow-up questions."

**Sultana** Posted the new MEd in STEM Education and Research poster on booth wall. This had quite a bit of interest which will be described below.

### 3 SULTANA'S MEETINGS WITH MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION (MOHE)

I had one meeting with Minister of Higher Education Dr. Khaled Al Anqari, two meetings with MOHE Deputy Minister Dr. Mohammad Al Ohali, and one meeting with MOHE Deputy Minister Dr. Ahmad Alsaif. We spoke about Obama-Singh STEM Education and Research project, Society of Muslim Women in Science, and memberships for American Physical Society. The most support for the Obama-Singh STEM program came from MOHE compared to the universities. Dr. Al Ohali commented the program as "super super good". They informed me of discussing the program in their meetings and will contact me with the outcome. All of them were very cordial and supportive. Dr. Al Anqari presented me the box of MOHE that contained all information, current activities, future directions, objectives etc. He also introduce me to the President of King Abdul Aziz University and



Figure 4: L: Sultana’s meeting with Deputy Minister of MOHE, Dr. Ahmad Alsaif. R: With Dr. Salim Al-Malik of MOHE at IECHE reception. Dr. Al Malik has been extremely helpful for us.

Finance Minister who were present during meeting with him. Deputy Minister Dr. Ahmad Alsaif also introduced me to Dr. Obaid Al Abdali of King Fahd University of Petroleum and Mineral who will also be involved with our project and was present during our meeting.

## 4 UNIVERSITY CONNECTIONS

### 4.1 Networking with Universities at IECHE: Sultana, Laura

#### Sultana:

My connections to Saudi universities included:

- 1) Promotion of Obama-Singh awarded STEM ER program at OSU,
- 2) Promotion of International Society of Muslim Women in Science.
- 3) Promotion of American Physical Society,
- 4) Scientific research,

At IECHE, I communicated items 1-3 to high officials, such as Deans or vice presidents, and professors of several universities, such as, Umm Al-Qura, King Khaled, North Border, Jazan, and King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, Majlis Alshura, Prince Sultan University, American University in Beirut in Lebanon, University of British Columbia in Canada, and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. They asked me to send materials of the 3 topics which I did after my return to the following people:

Dr Osama Shalabiea <cunit@nbu.edu.sa>,

Dr Wahid Bin Omar <drwahid@utm.my>,

Dr Mohamed H Al Behery <malqarni@kku.edu.sa>,

Dr Ahmed T Mubarak <atmubarak@kku.edu.sa>, ahmadtahir20@hotmail.com,

Dr A Al-Hussain <abo\_hossam@hotmail.com>,

Dr Salim A Kannan <admissions@aub.edu.lb>, faid@aub.edu.lb,



Figure 5: L: Professor Waleed Altaf of Umm Al Qura University in Makkah, the founding university in Saudi Arabia, and Dr. Elham Hassanain of Majlis Alshura (Saudi Parliament). R: Vice President Dr. A. Tahir of King Khaled University, biggest in number of students.

Dr Hanadi I AlAglā <ahanadi@ksu.edu.sa>,  
 Dr Safar A Ghamdi <safara@ksu.edu.sa>,  
 Dr Shiraj <sheery.123@hotmail.com>,  
 Dr Maha H Al-Qunaibit <vgs@pnu.edu.sa>,  
 Dr Amal J Fatani <afatani@mohe.gov.sa>,  
 Dr Hind Althib <halthib@ud.edu.sa>,  
 Dr Muneera A Al-messiere <malmessiere@ud.edu.sa>,  
 Dr Yasmeny <totinawaf@gmail.com>,  
 Dr Waleed J Altaf <wjaltaf@uqu.edu.sa>,  
 Dr Elhan MA Hassanain <hassanaine@shura.gov.sa>,e\_hassanain@yahoo.com,  
 Dr Nesreen Ateqad <nateqad@pscw.psu.edu.sa>,  
 Dr Obaid Alabdali <obaid@dralabdali.com>,  
 Dr Ahmed M Alsaif <amsaif@mohe.gov.sa>,  
 Ali A Al-Mahrous <mahrous@kfupm.edu.sa>

• King Fahd University of Petroleum and Mineral (KFUPM) has a number of positions for interested OSU graduates. I was asked at the booth and later again in an email to circulate the KFUPM positions in

- Cultural Anthropology
- International Relations
- History
- Psychology
- Sociology

for OSU graduates to apply. Apply on-line Visit: <http://www.kfupm.edu.sa> and then click on jobs link.

**Laura:**

Report on ALP: "Potential issue affecting the possibility of Saudi applicants to enter the American Language Program (and transfer to other academic programs at OSU)

Most of the Saudi prospective LL.M students are interested in applying to the OSU Moritz College of Law because of the possibility of getting conditional admission while they improve their English scores at an intensive English program. During the fair, it came to our attention that OSUs ALP program may be currently classified as saturated of Saudi students, with the adverse effect that they will not get scholarships to study there and then possibly transfer into other academic programs if their English levels get to the minimum required levels. Robert Eckhart, the Director of ESL programs, as well as Laura Fernandez are aware of this issue which could potentially negatively affect the number of successful Saudi applicants to OSU."

The Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (licensing and registration authority for all health professionals in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, plus delivery of postgraduate and training programs for medicine, dentistry, nursing and pharmacy) approached the booth to invite the OSU Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, and Pharmacy, to the Saudi Commission Conference for Health Specialists, taking place in Riyadh, April 4-6 or 11-13, 2015. Laura Fernandez forwarded the official paper invitation to the College of Medicine.

Laura had contact with:

Dr. Ghada Omar Fakieh, Vice-President for Institutional Advancement Dar Al-Hekman University, Tel: +966-12-6303333 ext 658 Email: gfakieh@dah.du.sa

Dr. Catherine MacKenzie, Lecturer in law/barrister (teaches in Saudi Arabian law schools), UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE , Tel: +44 (0) 1223337164 Email: cm517@cam.ac.uk

Dr. Said A. El Salamouny, Associate Professor, Plant Protection Department College of Food and Agricultural Sciences King Saud University Tel: +966-1-467-3592 Mobile: +966-594087806 Email: selsalamouny@ksu.edu.sa

Dr. Shafi Aldamer, Chairman, Department of General Studies King Saud University Tel: +966-3-860-7470 Cell: +966-56-320-0220 Email: aldamer@kfupm.edu.sa

Dr. Ibrahim M Ashankyty, Dean, Faculty of Applied Medical Sciences University of Hail Tel: +966-653-38340 Cell: +966-504-668722 Email: ishankyty@kau.edu.sa Email: i.shankyty@ooh.edu.sa

## 4.2 Networking with Individual Universities

I visited four universities with multiple lectures on the above topics at:

- Taibah University in Madina,
- Dammam University in Dammam,
- King Saud University in Riyadh,
- Princess Nira University in Riyadh

The information from the visits are:

- Items 1-3 of my topics received many enthusiastic comments. Each university praised very highly about the STEM program but felt that the program is at higher level that they can accommodate for their students. Their current preference of hiring of someone who has obtained Ph.D. in the US or in Europe or in Australia

- Each university expressed interest in collaborations after my research presentations
- I gave one workshop at King Saudi University and will be guiding a group on couple of projects



Figure 6: L: President Dr. Adnan Almazrooa of Taibah University opening speech for the OSU Obama-Singh STEM presentation. R: Recognition with Monogram of Taibah University and citation "Congratulations on delivering an outstanding talk during your visit to Taibah University. Truly speaking your topic was timely and your perceptions were sound pragmatic and thought provoking and the audience were fascinated. Therefore in recognition to your excellent services rendered to the cause of education, please accept this plaque as a token of our appreciation and gratitude", President of Taibah University Dr. Adnan Abdullah Almazroa, April 1 2014 (presented by the Head Dr. Inass of Women's College).

- There is large number of undergrad students in science in each university and the number of postgraduate students is also increasing.
- Existing universities are expanding considerably and new universities are being established. At this time they have about 32 public and about 10 private universities.
- While all universities accommodate both male and females, King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals has only male students, but expects to be co-ed in future, and Princess Nora University is solely for females.

### 4.3 i) Taibah University in Madina: Sultana

My visit and presentations at Taibah University, with a population of about 62,000, were widely circulated in flyers and posters and were well organized. Taibah is the main university in Madina while the other one, Islamic University, is yet to open science departments. Taibah University used to be branch campus of King Abdul Aziz University in Makkah about 10 years ago. It has about 500 female undergraduate students with physics major. University and its research program are developing. Laboratories are being built with new equipments. Even at this stage, it received \$3M research grant during the last academic year and one Pharmacy faculty, Professor Gharib, has 4M Riyals for his research projects. My final lecture of series of four was coordinated with compliments through a poem written by an officer at University Research Office. I was honored with the monogram of Taibah University by President Dr. Adnan Al Mazrooa. The university treated me with highest form of

hospitality. The Head of Women's College, Dr. Inass gave bag full of university souvenirs, the Vice Dean of Faculty of Science gave a box of Azwa dates, Physics Department gave me three boxes of dates, prayer rugs, and Hanna. Dates are most common gift and serving food with Arabian coffee for guests in Saudi Arabia. Madina soil is said to rich in special minerals and produce one special date, called Azwa, not grown anywhere.

Taibah University interest in OSU (from meetings with the President, Vice President, Vice Dean of Faculty of Science):

1) Trainings for teachers for improved teaching and academic excellence. Will be more interested in having OSU trainers at Taibah University for more of its teachers be benefited.

2) Undergraduate students taking OSU classes for a period although the degree is from Dammam University

3) Research guidance through visits. Already discussed one Physics project to initiate.

4) Research in water, minerals, dates in Madina

- I commincated with Dr. John Lenhart and Dr. Z. Bohrerova of Ohio Water Resource Center at OSU and Dr. Richard Moore of Environmental and Natural Resources. I emailed the relevant into to Taibah University.

- I met Vice Provost of Graduate Studies Professor Pat Osmer regarding the courses at OSU who adviced the following steps:

- Find Global interest
- Identify the areas of OSU interest
- Faculty interest in the respective areas
- Meeting the standard of OSU academic level
- Meeting the English standard

#### 4.4 ii) Dammam University in Dammam: Sultana

My next visit was Dammam University in Dammam. It used be part of Al-Faisal University, but was made independent by the Saudi government. It also has about 60,000 students. It has more emphasis on engineering for males and biomedical engineering for females. During my visit, its main interest was our x-ray research for cancer treatment. Although my visit included four lectures, the invitation to various deans and departments highlighted the keynote talk on cancer treatment. I was also given the Trophy of Dammam University and a letter of recognition by Professor Hariri, Dean of College of Engineering. University took care of my local hospitality and airfare.

Followings are the topics discussed by Dammam University for OSU:

1) Obama-Singh project with be discussed in International Affairs Office and then to the Rector of the university

2) Dammam University is very much interested in having its 4th year engineering undergraduate students to take 1 year of classes, particularly in laboratory oriented, at OSU.

3) Dammam University has an 8 weeks of Summer trainings, for hands-on workshop and trouble shooting knowledge. It is very much interested in having the trainings at OSU although the degree is from Dammam.

4) It would like to have OSU's guidance for benchmarking of its graduate program. Guidance and help in getting accreditation, such ad, for ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology)

5) It will welcome very much OSU acting as external evaluator for the university.





Figure 7: L: Dean of College of Engineering Dr. Hariri of Dammam University at OSU booth for collaborative research interest in OSU Water Research Center. R: Trophy of Dammam University after my presentation.

- 6) Research in water, minerals, dates in Madina
  - I did the similar things I did with Taibah University.

#### 4.5 iii) King Saud University: Sultana

This is one of the oldest universities and recipient of the highest amount of research grants. It is active in many research areas. There are two domes for astronomy research. One of them is more devoted to solar study. It has over 70,000 students. During the 5-day visit, I met people from various science departments, male and female, and deans of the women college. It took care of my local hospitality.

King Saud University interest in OSU (with Physics faculty members, from both male and female sections):

- 1) Training for its teachers for academic excellence. It would like the Obama-Singh project adopted for the teachers.
- 2) Interested more in research collaboration. I gave a workshop on Atomic structure and R-matrix programs to a combined group of male and females. I will be involved in a couple of research projects.
  - I have an appointment with Professor Pat Osmer regarding the courses at OSU

#### 4.6 iv) Princess Nora University: Sultana, Laura, Bob

##### 4.6.1 a) Scientific research guidance with exchange program: Sultana

I spend one day at Princess Nora University. My visit was circulated and the Dean of faculty of science came to the talk. The lab tour showed its emphasis on strong undergraduate study in science. It has about 800 physics major students. Research is being developed, and there is a lot of motivation to initiate it. I have been asked to guide x-ray research in astronomy.



Figure 8: L: The two astronomy domes on building tops of King Saud University, R: Meeting with Physics Chair Professor Safar, Vice Chair Professor Norah of female college, and others after presentation of Obama-Singh STEM program of OSU.



Figure 9: L: Seminar presentation in Princess Nora University by Sultana. R: With two faculty members at the Knowledge objectives of the University.

Princess Nora University interest in OSU:

1) Joint program like it has with Dublin City University in Ireland. Dublin sends faculty members to teach using its own standard to PNU students. If the students do well in the program, they will receive two certificates, one from Dublin and one from PNU. However, if a student fails to maintain Dublin standard, she will be switched to PNU curriculum and will receive only PNU degree.

2) Research guidance for its faculty members who can travel to OSU for the projects for a limited time.

#### **4.6.2 b) College of Law: By Laura**

Besides attending the OSU booth at the conference catering to prospective students questions, the College of Law made some contacts with specific Saudi Arabian law schools in order to create stronger ties of cooperation, possible agreements to give priority review to their applicants, and discussed the possibility with an all-female university to create a joint LL.M program (OSU Moritz/Princess Nora University).

The proposal was to design a joint LL.M program to address the pressing issue that Saudi women are not allowed to study outside of Saudi Arabia unless they are accompanied by a male sponsor (usually their husband, father, or brother). In the last five (5) years, Saudi Arabia has seen a great increase in the number of Saudi women who are able to study law and desire to get a higher degree in the legal field outside of their country. Princess Nora University is looking for a partner for cooperation willing to allow Saudi female students to web stream law classes at US law schools for Saudi female students who would be sitting in classrooms in Saudi Arabia. The application procedure for these students would be the same as if students were coming to Columbus, and they are willing to pay the same tuition. They would complete 12 credits through web streamed classes from the US university and the other 12 credits from classes taught at their law school in Saudi Arabia. The degree would be a joint degree with both universities names. This proposal is currently being discussed with the Dean of the Moritz College of Law as well as Princess Nora University.

Finally, the Moritz College of Law is interested in opening a pathway for Saudi women, especially, to participate in a law and leadership program at the college, as part of their LL.M experience. Continued access and attendance at the IECHE Conference would help us increase the visibility of our LL.M. program to prospective Saudi applicants (both men and (specially) women).

II. The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law connections made at IECHE  
PRINCESS NORA ABDUL RAHMAN UNIVERSITY (RIYADH)

Dr. Ahmed Alyousef , Legal Counsel and Faculty Member, Princess Nora Abdul Rahman University. Office: +966-1-824-3965 Mobile: +966-549-522225 Email: adalyousef@pnu.edu.sa

Hanouf Alhazzaa Tel: +966-533-227720 halhazzaa@llm13.law.harvard.edu

#### **4.6.3 c) English: By Bob**

Opportunities for Future Collaboration: I had a meeting with a member of the English Language Center at Princess Noura University. They are interested in starting an online English language course through distance education platforms, for their female students who cannot go abroad to study. I am not sure if this is viable and am waiting on follow-up information from them before going any further with this opportunity.



Figure 10: Robert Ecckhart is being interviewed by IECHE media.

#### 4.7 v) Prince Sultana University: Laura, Sultana

We had some connection with the private, but well funded and more known, Prince Sultan University in Riyadh. I had one afternoon meeting with Professor Nesreen Ateqad of Prince Sultan University and Professor Laila Babsail of King Saud University. PSU emphasizes largely strong undergraduate teaching.

Laura had meeting with representatives of Prince Sultan University. She had contact with:

Dr. Rimah S. Alyahya, Dean, Tel: +966-1-494-8600 Email: ralyahya@pscw.psu.edu.sa Email: remyaya@gmail.com

Dr. Emna Chikhaoui, Chair, Law Department Tel: +966-11-494-89729 Cell: +966-501-047-284 Email: echikhaoui@pscw.edu.sa Email: emna7c@yahoo.com

Ms. Rasha A. AlHammad, Supervisor admissions/registration Tel: +966-11-494-8595 Email: Alhammad@pscw.psu.edu.sa Email: Rasha.alhammad@gmail.com

#### 4.8 Networking through Media

**Bob's report:** Media Relations: OSU was chosen as one of only four (4) U.S. institutions to be featured on a live broadcast from the IECHE. This 30-minute interview reached thousands of people through the Ministry of Higher Education television channel and is still available on youtube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIFvL7yq2sc>

During the interview, I had an opportunity to first talk about the 175 areas of study available at OSU and 492 academic specializations. I was also able to talk about the Saudi Student Organization at Ohio State, which helps students adjust culturally to be in Columbus and helps to promote Saudi culture on campus. Finally, I was able to talk about the Global Engagement nights sponsored by OIA and how important it is that we help international student engage with many opportunities here at OSU.

**Sultana:** I was had one video interview for graduate study by one university..

#### 4.9 Networking with OSU Alumni:

**Bob' report:** Alumni Relations: Laura Fernandez and I attended a family meal in the home of Ibrahim Al-Beayeyz on Friday April 18th. We talked with him quite a bit about his time at OSU



Figure 11: OSU Alumni connection: L: Alumni family - Dr. Alaa and Khalipha. R: Laura and Bob attended lunch invitation by the OSU alumnus to his house

and tried to strengthen his bonds to Columbus. I think he and his wife will come visit campus later this year. We also met Dr. Salim Al-Malik several times and thanked him for his support. We gave him regard from you and Interim President Alutto as well. There were also quite a few alumni and children of alumni who visited the booth throughout the week.

**Sultana:** In addition, we met at the booth a very happy graduate of OSU business school. I also met one faculty at King Saud University who did postdoc at OSU and was very happy to see me. We went out with Dr. Alaa (went to Columbus elementary school and did Ph.D. at University of North Texas) at King Saud University Health Sciences and her husband Khalifa to the Al Masmak castle won and founded the modern Saudi Arabia by King Abdul Aziz. We also did some shopping and formed a strong bond with them who would be willing to help OSU if needed.

#### 4.10 Networking through MOHE Event

**Sultana:** MOHE Picnic: MOHE invited us for the Desert Picnic. Myself only attended it and had the experience of a camel ride, Saudi folk songs and dances, and Saudi meals. It also gave me the opportunity to communicate and promote the new STEM program and other topics to representatives of universities in Algeria, Lebanon, France, and US as we sat around the meal.

### 5 Invitation by US Ambassador

US Embassy organized reception at Quincy House for US representatives and Saudi officials in education. Laura and Bob were exhausted, So I attended the event and met several people both from US and King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals. The ambassador gave the information of 108 US university participants and spoke of continuing strong relation between US and Saudi Arabia since the meeting between King Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia and US President Franklin Roosevelt. The ambassador was given a Saudi Trophy at the reception.

The ambassador gave statistics



Figure 12: MOHE picnic: L: Sultana's experience of camel ride with the help from Saudi men. R: Discussion with Professor Laila Babsail of King Saud University and Professor Nesreen Ateqad of Prince Sultan University



Figure 13: US Embassy reception: L: With Ambassador at Quency House. R: Picture of historical meeting on a boat of King Abdul Azziz and President Roosevelt in 1945, initiation of Saudi Arab-USA friendship (Boat replica below the picture)

- There are 32 public and 10 public universities
- Ohio is number 3 in choices of Saudi students

## 6 TIPS FOR PARTICIPATION AT IECHE

Being the leader of the delegate, I spent quite of bit of time learning about visa processing, booth set-up, electronic, Internet and other supplies, transportation, making university banners, air-line tickets etc. in addition to learning gender issue, traditional issues, etc. A significant part of this learning was unnecessary as many things were provided to us. The following tips should help for the next IECHE.

- I did not face any gender issue or problem in the conference, not in any communication or in any preference. This contradicted the earlier information given to me.

- We got government visa at no cost except for visa paper processing fee of \$10.58. Dr. Salim Al-Malik sent us the information to use in our visa application.

- MOHE bought the business class tickets for the airline travels we chose

- Transportation for airport and conference trips were provided

- Car rental through the Al Faisaliah hotel was paid by MOHE

- MOHE provided us the booth with removable metal walls on three side, one desk, similar to that for a computer, with locked cabinets, one table and two chairs.

- Scotch tape was needed to hang the posters on the wall.

- MOHE gave us free power supply and Internet at the booth

- MOHE booked rooms at Al Faisaliah hotel for all nights from two nights before and 2 nights after IECHE, that is from 13th to 20th April.

- Our hotel Internet use was paid by MOHE

- Food was paid for at the hotel. MOHE also arranged meals at IECHE.

- Water bottles at IECHE were provided free

- There was a MOHE volunteer station in the hotel for any question, arrangements and other help, and also at IECHE.

- We had one dinner and networking invitation at the Quency House, the residence of the US ambassador. Transportation was arranged by Al Failiah Hotel for which we did not pay

- While abiya for a woman in public is must, there is no strict rule for head cover at IECHE or inside Riyadh where we traveled. No one came after a woman who did not have a head cover

- We had much more positive experience than expected