



COLUMBIA GLOBAL CENTERS | AMMAN

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

C O N T E N T S

INTRODUCTORY MESSAGES

- Message from Lee C. Bollinger ● 1
- Message from Safwan M. Masri ● 2

COLUMBIA GLOBAL CENTERS

- University Initiative for International Students ● 7
- Virtual Internships ● 9
- Global Columbia Collaboratory ● 11
- University Leadership Series ● 12
- “In Conversation with” ● 13
- Commencement ● 15

COLUMBIA GLOBAL CENTERS | AMMAN

- Moving Beyond COVID-19’s Shadow ● 20
- Webinars 2020-2021 ● 21
- Earth Day ● 24
- Programming and Research Support:
Pre-Pandemic and Beyond ● 25
 - Forced Migration and Displacement ● 26
 - Entrepreneurship and Youth ● 36
 - Conferences and Workshops ● 38
- Studio-X Amman ● 41
- Speaker Series ● 42
- Governance and Team ● 44
 - Faculty Advisory Committee ● 44
 - Advisory Board ● 46
 - Our Team ● 48



MESSAGE FROM LEE C. BOLLINGER

**President
Columbia University**

Our network of Global Centers has become central to the University's teaching, research, and scholarship. The Centers afford students and faculty the opportunity to engage with the people and ideas shaping the modern world, at a moment when that need could not be more urgent. And when they return to our home campuses, those who have travelled abroad play an essential role in broadening the intellectual outlook of all of us. It is simply a fact that we would not be the same institution without the Global Centers.



MESSAGE FROM SAFWAN M. MASRI

**Executive Vice President for Global Centers and Global Development
Columbia University**

A challenging year the world over, 2020 vividly illustrated the perils of not heeding recommendations backed by scientifically proven data. Making decisions based on populism and false assumptions has cost the world dearly.

Yet the response to the Covid-19 crisis by health care professionals and the medical research community has demonstrated the power of pooled resources, as brilliant minds came together from around the world to come up in record time, albeit still not quickly enough, with real solutions to a global pandemic not seen in our lifetime. The world can now afford more than a glimmer of hope, as millions of vaccines are being distributed globally, and now that knowledge and reason are once again prevailing in political leadership.

This cooperative approach, and its attendant benefits, was also a hallmark of the Columbia Global Centers network during 2020. When students were unable to fulfill their in-person summer internships, the Global Centers tapped into our global network of institutional relationships and created virtual internships in ten different regions of the world. When a dispersed University community wanted continued access to faculty and Global Centers' expertise, we responded by creating dynamic, globally inclusive webinar programming

around top-of-mind issues. And when travel restrictions and uncertainty about school reopening threatened to undermine access to University experiences for Columbia's international student body, we provided access to pop-up study and community spaces that brought Columbia to its students, wherever they were around the world.

At a time when so many turned inward and the world became insular, we went out—even more—and we adapted, innovated, and built community. We were not isolated groups serving specific locations, but a global body functioning together for all. Our defining purpose—of being an essential, international part of the University—has never been more clearly realized.

The network of Columbia Global Centers has turned a corner in a way that is enormously beneficial—to their stakeholders in every region, and to the University. This year, 2021, is one of consolidation for our network, as we strive to continuously grow and strengthen the international presence essential to the University and the global community.

I am immensely grateful to our many partners and supporters all over the world who make the work of the Columbia Global Centers possible and impactful, and I am especially proud of our staff, who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to ensure that we deliver on our promise.



-

COLUMBIA GLOBAL CENTERS



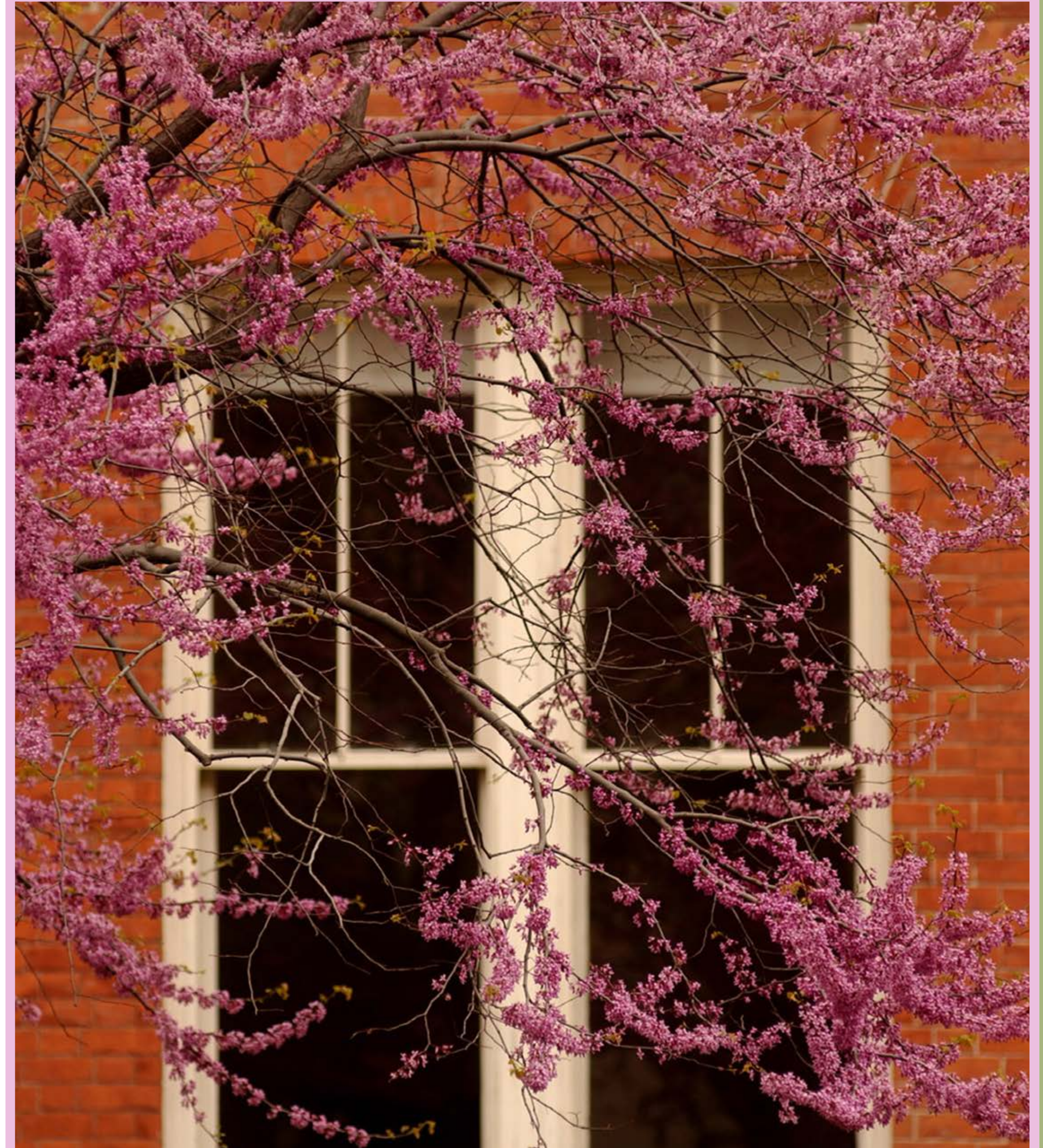
The current global crisis started as a viral pandemic, but in a few months' time, its impact broadened to include the health of economies, institutions, and industries, crippling each, and unconstrained by borders. In every country and at every level, our collective *cri de coeur* has been adaptability, global cooperation, and shared solutions. In effect, everyone, everywhere is seeing the importance of these values, something President Lee C. Bollinger identified years ago when he founded the Columbia Global Centers in 2009, and why the Centers have grown to become an essential part of the University's identity.


As national isolation intensified, as the trend toward hardening borders increased, and in response to the obvious needs that the crisis revealed, the Global Centers proved they were uniquely positioned to help connect the world, share information globally, and serve the University's constituents. We did not create a new model, but we tested and expanded our model in a new world, and it flourished.

Our mission—to advance Columbia's engagement with the world and to enhance global knowledge exchange—has never been as critical as it is today. Our pivots during the pandemic have grown beyond what we ourselves could have imagined, and they have left us with a stronger infrastructure and valuable lessons in how we think as an institution about our engagement in the world and about how we support our international students.

Over the course of twelve years, the network of Global Centers has grown from its first two in Jordan and China, to nine in nine countries. Columbia University is now present, in every sense of the word, in five continents.

In just the three years before the pandemic—through outreach, programming, and events—the Centers engaged over 1,000 faculty across all 18 schools and affiliates; hosted 74,000 program attendees; enrolled 4,250 undergraduate and graduate students; involved 500 alumni; and held 1,400 programs on topics ranging from global climate change to the impact of malnutrition in various parts of the world.





Since the Global Centers pivoted in response to the pandemic crisis, they curated more than 650 instructive webinars, bringing Columbia expertise in conversation with essential voices from all over the world and reaching hundreds of thousands of audience members.

The Centers collaborated in their programming with every school on campus, and they partnered with Columbia College on the innovative Global Columbia Collaboratory, and with Columbia University Press and other campus entities to introduce new online series and novel programs. This programming has led to new, sustained opportunities for tangible and impactful collaborations that engage our faculty with regional partners around relevant topics.

The Global Centers supported faculty and graduate student research around the world during the pandemic, ensuring the continuity of projects, and they leveraged their Faculty Advisory Committees in identifying priorities and initiating new programming. Roughly 120 faculty members who constitute the committees were convened as groups that cut across their particular Center affiliations, functioning, in effect, as a network, in keeping with the Global Centers' model. The result has been deeper and broader faculty engagement than ever before, and the development of innovative network-wide global solutions and collaborations.

The Global Centers also pivoted quickly to offer students virtual internships, capitalizing on the network's local and regional networks of employers and generating 1,900 applications from students in more than 50 countries. More than 400 students from 15 schools across campus took up positions. The summer pilot program was so successful that it was expanded and extended into the academic year and into Summer 2021.

Perhaps the most pioneering work the Centers performed during the crisis was in leading the University's efforts to provide international students study and community spaces—to convene, connect, and collaborate—at the Global Centers and nine pop-up sites around the world, in addition to student

access to study facilities in 80+ other cities. More than 4,000 students have registered for and accessed the spaces, and thousands more have been engaged in robust programming and through new communication channels designed to meet the needs of our international student body.

“The Columbia Global Center network now spans the world, promoting teaching, research, public outreach, in addition to local and regional engagement in Jordan, Turkey, Tunisia, Kenya, Brazil, Chile, China, India, and France. Through this extraordinary contribution to our University community, the Centers are fulfilling their promise individually and collectively, making Columbia a global 21st century university.”

Lee C. Bollinger
President, Columbia University

University Initiative for International Students

In the fall of 2020, President Lee C. Bollinger and the Columbia Global Centers announced a University initiative to provide international students with new, “pop-up” Columbia-designated study and community spaces around the world.

The locations of designated spaces, offered through a partnership with the co-working company WeWork, were selected for the purpose of reaching the largest number of students who could not return to the United States as a result of the pandemic. These included Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Hong Kong, Seoul, Singapore, and London. In addition to these locations, the nine Global Centers opened their doors to students who wished to use any of their spaces, when and where local conditions allowed. To ensure the best possible study environment for learning during the pandemic, each of the Centers welcomed students with upgraded technology, restructured spaces, and amended health and safety protocols.

The University also offered passes to non-Columbia designated WeWork spaces in more than 80 cities, along with access to partnership spaces.

Since the fall, the University, through the Columbia Global Centers, has engaged more than 4,500 students in 90+ cities, providing them with technologically appropriate and COVID safe study environments, as well as robust and specially curated programming, developed in partnership with various schools, academic units, regional alumni, and student volunteers.



“The dedicated site has been popular with students here. Not only has it enhanced students’ academic experiences, but it has also fostered a greater sense of community among Columbia students in Hong Kong.”

Hong Kiu Mak
CC '21, Hong Kong

“I am really happy that Columbia Global Centers I Istanbul provides us with a very nice study space. All the staff are welcoming and the Center offers a quiet and comfortable environment to focus on my studies. My experience at the Center gave me the feeling of the Columbia community even when thousands of miles away from the campus.”

Melik Kuru
SoA '21, Istanbul

The initiative was extended into the Spring and Summer 2021 terms and offered many wonderful in-person moments for the student community, such as graduation celebrations, yield events for newly-admitted students, and information sessions for prospective students.

Additionally, a “returning-to-campus” programming series was created to support international students as they transition back to life on campus. The series includes practical components about vaccines, visas, and public health and public safety on campus, and educational programming on topics such as arts and culture in New York City.



“The WeWork in Seoul makes me feel like a Columbia student again. The library-like space meant so much during midterms and the more social space has created a small but lively Columbia community. It’s brought a slice of home to Seoul and I’m so grateful for it.”

Annie Kim
CC '21, Seoul

“I’ve absolutely been loving the entire experience. I think it’s so cool that we get our own office space to work and hang out with other students! I really like the variety of people I’ve been meeting—it’s not just freshmen, but students across different schools and degrees. All the WeWorks staff are extremely nice and accommodating, and the location is absolutely fantastic.”

Sean Harrison
CC '24, London

Virtual Internships

Columbia Global Centers around the world mobilized their vast networks to identify and generate hundreds of virtual internship opportunities for Columbia students.

The start of the pandemic in spring 2020 deprived many Columbia students of opportunities to pursue formal summer internships that were abruptly canceled.

To help address and alleviate this problem, the network of Global Centers around the world banded together to identify virtual internships with the cooperation of their local partners. These are meaningful experiences for students to support a variety of projects at organizations around the world.

The Amman Center identified and helped fill 41 virtual internships among its partners in Jordan and the region.

Columbia Global Centers | Amman partners who participated in this initiative:

- AB Accelerator by Arab Bank
- Bank al Etihad
- Center for Strategic Studies at The University of Jordan
- Darat al Funun
- Global Green Growth Institute
- Kuwait Life Science Company
- Methods for Irrigation and Agriculture
- The United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Jordan
- RIWAQ - Center for Architectural Conservation
- Wamda

Samuel Shih GS '23
Virtual intern at UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Amman, Jordan
Summer-Fall 2020

I'm a junior at Columbia University in the Dual Bachelor's Program with Sciences Po majoring in Economics and Political Science. I'm from Orange County, California, and enjoy biking, playing badminton with the local Chinese seniors club, and binging on *The Great British Bakeoff*. I have always been interested in how systems work, such as the various systems that run governments and economic markets. I was going to intern at a boutique investment firm as an equity research intern, but with COVID-19 and lock-downs in California, I was unable to carry out that internship.

Thanks to the Virtual Internship Program launched by Columbia Global Centers, I was able to apply and work as an Economic Analyst with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO) in Amman. I was involved in compiling and analyzing data to be used in a policy brief that would contain recommendations for any potential changes in Jordan's poverty policies. My team was quite small and consisted of two people. This meant I received a lot of face time with my direct supervisor as well as the Chief Economist of UNRCO, both of whom were greatly supportive. While my team was small, I was able to interact and sit in on UN Country Team meetings where UN agencies would all convene and discuss their upcoming plans or new data that was particularly



important. Unlike my previous experience, my work here was quite quantitative, so I learned how to approach, analyze, and visualize massive amounts of data with Excel, R, and PowerBI.

While this internship was online and therefore, harder to build camaraderie with my supervisors, they extended the internship from the initial three-month length to six-months. This allowed me to see the final product of all the work we put in and also meant more time for me to bond with them. I approached this internship with the objective of learning how the UN's ecosystem of agencies cooperate with national governments, but I learned much more, including about the internal dynamics of UN Country Teams and the specifics of the MENA region that make certain poverty policies better than others. Overall, my internship was far better than I could have hoped for and gave me access to new knowledge and meaningful experiences.



Ariel Tao CC '23
Virtual intern at Wamda
Spring-Summer 2021

I'm a rising junior at Columbia College majoring in Financial Economics and Sustainable Development. I am from Shanghai, China. I was a competitive golf player back in high school in New Jersey. I am inspired everyday by how much I have yet to learn about the world, and how much I can do to change it.

As part of the virtual internship program offered by the Global Centers, I worked with Wamda Capital, a leading venture capital in the UAE, as a journalist intern. I am interested in venture capital, and I have always wanted to learn more about the MENA region. This was the perfect opportunity for me to combine my two interests.

I conducted research about the emerging ventures in MENA, especially in the field of e-commerce and logistics, which helped me understand the special challenges that these companies face with the consumers in the region. I also contributed my knowledge of Chinese venture capital trends to penning a feature on what MENA VCs and startups can learn from the Chinese example. While I did not have experience in business reporting before, my editorial director at Wamda was incredibly helpful in assisting me land interviews and outline my report. Overall, I enjoyed this rewarding experience to step out of my comfort zone and try something new, which helped me learn more about the region and also gain tangible skills in business writing.

Raphael Kazandjis SPS '21
Virtual intern at AB Accelerator by Arab Bank
Fall 2020

I recently graduated from Columbia University with a Master's degree in Applied Analytics. Originally from Cyprus, I arrived in New York in 2019 to start a new chapter in my life. Without any regrets, it has been the most educational and eye opening experience of my life. Here, I was able to study at a world class institution and practice my passion for combat sports at the highest possible level.

In October 2020, as a second year master's student, I was granted an internship at Arab Bank as a FinTech analyst through a program run by the Global Centers. Learning from exceptional professionals about a very complex and interesting industry was a privilege that I'm extremely grateful for. In hindsight, even though it was a remote role, the experience opened many doors for me and enhanced my development as a professional.



“We’re at a moment when the need for global cooperation to address the problems facing humanity has never been greater. This program offers students the opportunity to learn about these complex challenges, collaborate with experts and with their peers, and propose meaningful solutions that can translate into action.”

Lee C. Bollinger
President, Columbia University

Global Columbia Collaboratory

Columbia Global Centers, in partnership with Columbia’s Center for Undergraduate Global Engagement and Columbia World Projects, developed the Global Columbia Collaboratory to help students learn more about global challenges, enhance their global competencies by connecting and cooperating across a global network, and empower them to make a difference in the world as global citizens.

The program includes a series of seminars designed to offer students the skills, understanding, and networks to grow into the leaders our world needs to thoughtfully address our increasingly complex challenges. The program also focuses on the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences by allowing students to engage in facilitated reflections to consider ways the pandemic has affected communities, while having the opportunity to generate ideas and design collaborative projects that target concrete solutions.

A public component of the Global Columbia Collaboratory are global seminars, led by faculty and experts drawn from the Global Centers’ extensive networks.

Summer 2020

In Summer 2020, the Global Columbia Collaboratory focused on three key areas related to the COVID-19 pandemic:

[The Future of Globalization: Consequences of the Pandemic on Supply Chains](#)

[The Pandemic: Self, Other, and the World Beyond Us](#)

[The False Choice: Public vs. Economic Health](#)

A few student groups elected to continue their experience by working together and building their reflections into projects. View them on the [final project overview](#).

Fall 2020

In Fall 2020, the Global Columbia Collaboratory focused on global challenges affecting our communities:

[The U.S. Elections and What Comes Next?](#)

[The Food Security Challenge](#)

[Is Social Media Undermining Democracy?](#)

Spring/ Summer 2021

In Spring/ Summer 2021, the Global Columbia Collaboratory focused on the impact of global challenges and how they intersect with the future:

[The Future of Cities: Rethinking Urban Sustainability](#)

[The Future of Democracy](#)

[The Future of Work](#)

[The Future of Love](#)

University Leadership Series

The University Leadership Series was launched by Columbia Global Centers to help showcase prominent Columbia leaders consisting of conversations among University leadership, faculty, alumni, and students.

This series addresses two intersecting areas that continue to generate considerable interest among international students we have been supporting this year—deepening their engagement with University leadership, and learning more about the present and future of their respective fields.

Each event features senior University administrators, in a conversation on a particular sector of interest to students, focusing on both the U.S. as well as the broader global landscape.

•

December 8, 2020

[University Leadership Forum for International Students](#)

President **Lee C. Bollinger**

•

December 10, 2020

Barnard International Student Forum

President **Sian Beilock**

•

March 24, 2021

[The Present and Future of Health and Policy](#)

Deans **Merit Janow** and **Linda Fried**

•

April 22, 2021

[Crossing Disciplines: How Architecture, Art, and Neuroscience Shape Thought and Imagine the Future](#)

Deans **Carol Becker** and **Amale Andraos** with **Rui Costa** of Columbia's Zuckerman Institute

•

May 12, 2021

[The Present and Future of Undergraduate Education](#)

Deans **Lisa Rosen-Metsch** and **James Valentini**

•

May 26, 2021

[Climate Change and the Transition to Net Zero](#)

Deans **Mary Boyce** and **Costis Maglaras**

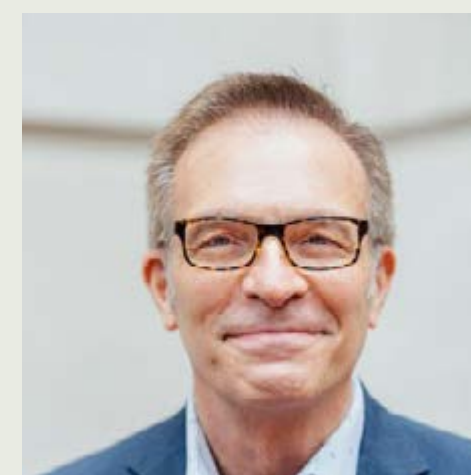
•

July 19, 2021

What Do We Owe One Another?

Deans **Gillian Lester** and **Melissa Begg**

Events were introduced and moderated by **Safwan Masri**, Executive Vice President for Global Centers and Global Development and **Julie Kornfeld**, Vice Provost for Academic Programs.



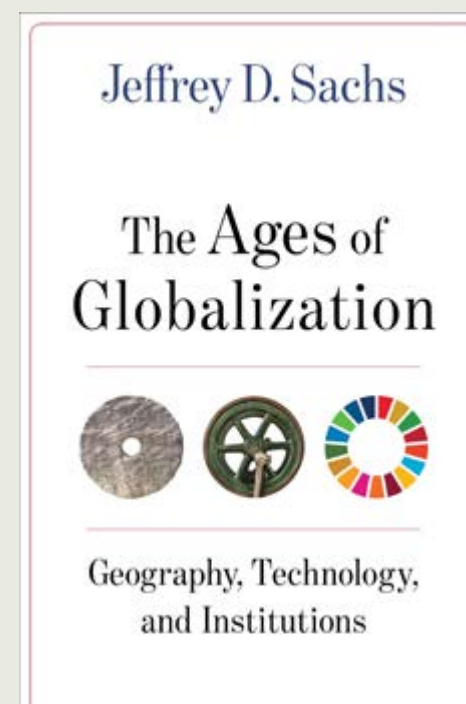
“In Conversation with”

“In Conversation with” is a book series that aims to bring global audiences together over a shared love of knowledge and a passion for books, and to provide direct access to the authors of original works, thoughtful research, and cutting edge ideas.

Over the past year, we invited authors to discuss their newly released University Press books, pairing them with a carefully selected interviewer—someone we know would engage and challenge.

Conversations are chaired by Safwan Masri, Executive Vice President for Global Centers and Global Development.

“In Conversation with” was launched in June 2020 and is a joint production between Columbia Global Centers and Columbia University Press.

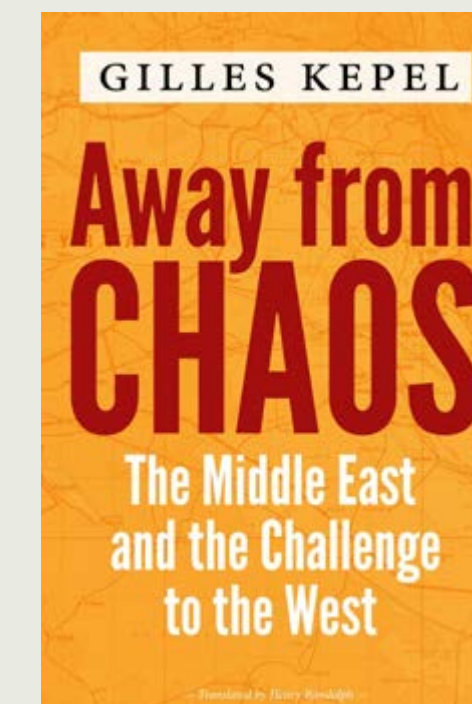


June 5, 2020

[The Ages of Globalization](#)

David Lawler in conversation with Jeffrey D. Sachs

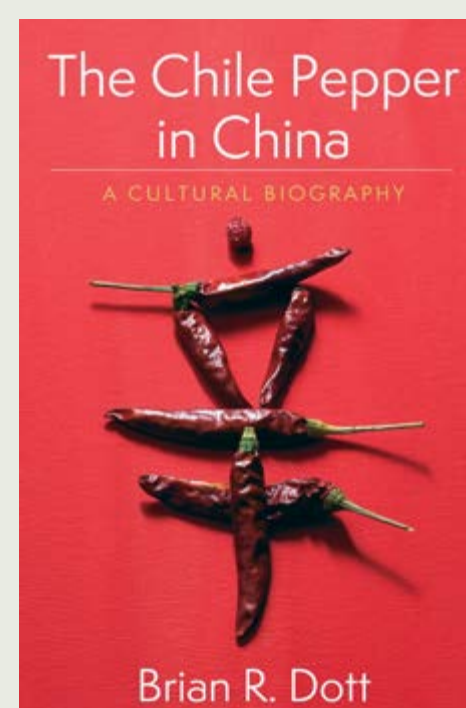
In partnership with Columbia University's Committee on Global Thought, The Earth Institute, Center on Global Economic Governance, Center for Sustainable Development, Student Union for Sustainable Development, Master of Public Administration Program, and Shakespeare and Company



July 2, 2020

[Away from Chaos: The Middle East and the Challenge to the West](#)

Lionel Barber in conversation with Gilles Kepel

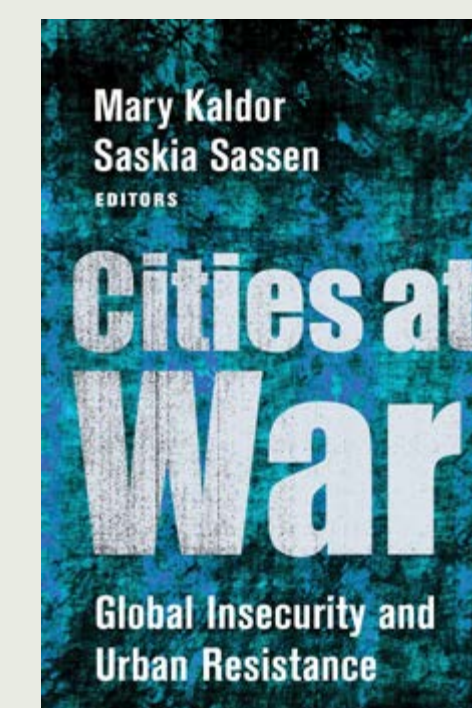


July 17, 2020

[The Chile Pepper in China: A Cultural Biography](#)

Kaiser Kuo in conversation with Brian Dott

In partnership with ASIANetwork - Promoting Asia in the Liberal Arts, SupChina, Columbia University Weatherhead East Asian Institute, and Whitman College

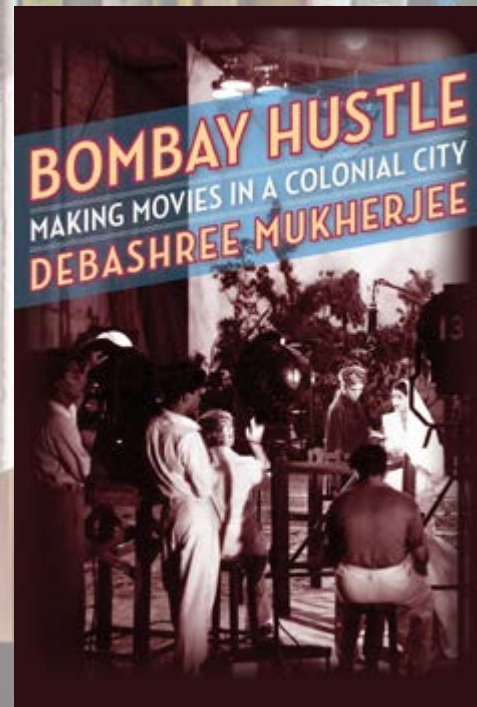


August 11, 2020

[Cities at War: Global Insecurity and Urban Resistance](#)

Steve Coll in conversation with Saskia Sassen and Mary Kaldor

In partnership with Columbia University's Committee on Global Thought, Globalization and World Cities, and The London School of Economics and Political Science

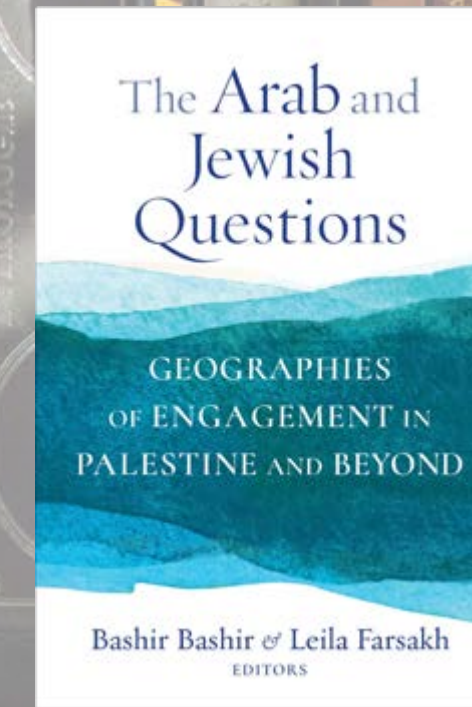


December 3, 2020

[Bombay Hustle: Making Movies in a Colonial City](#)

Ranjani Mazumdar and Tejaswini Ganti
in conversation with Debashree Mukherjee

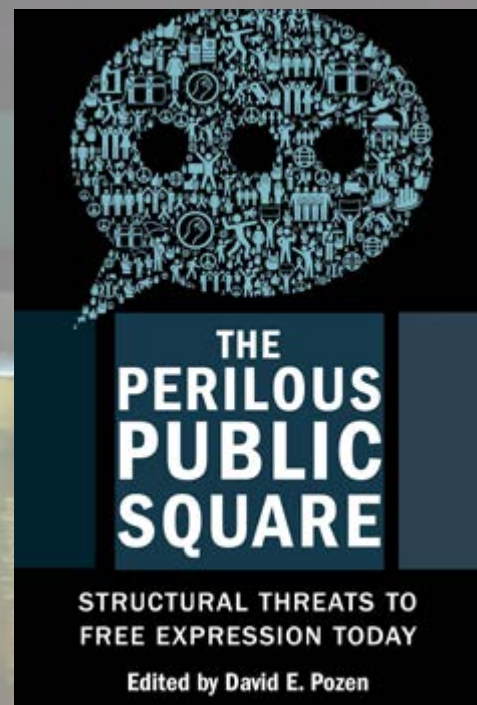
In partnership with Penguin India



March 3, 2021

[The Arab and Jewish Questions: Geographies of Engagement in Palestine and Beyond](#)

Peter Beinart in conversation with
Bashir Bashir and Leila Farsakh

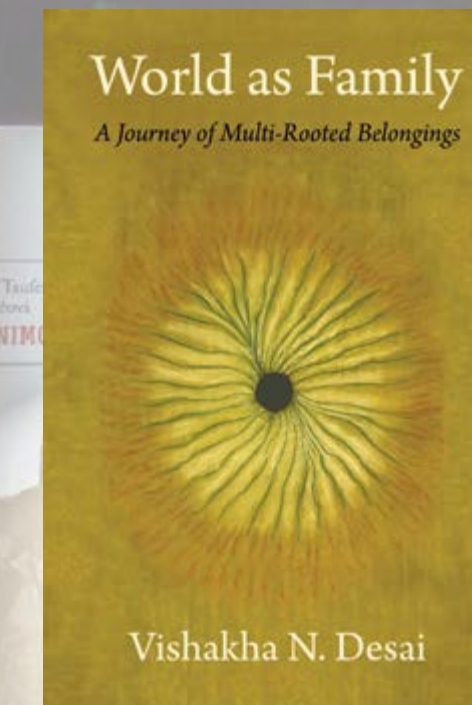


December 14, 2020

[The Perilous Public Square: Structural Threats to Free Expression Today](#)

Matthew Connelly and Tim Wu
in conversation with David Pozen

In partnership with Columbia Law School's Lawyers, Community, and Impact Series; Columbia University's Committee on Global Thought; and Knight First Amendment Institute

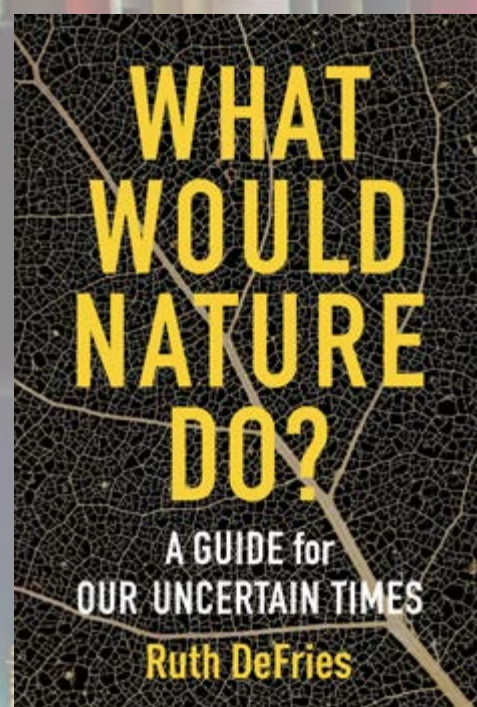


June 7, 2021

[World as Family: A Journey of Multi-Rooted Belongings](#)

Irina Bokova in conversation with
Vishakha Desai

In partnership with Columbia University's Committee on Global Thought



January 25, 2021

[What Would Nature Do? A Guide for Our Uncertain Times](#)

Oliver Morton in conversation with
Ruth DeFries



June 14, 2021

[To Write as if Already Dead](#)

Kate Briggs in conversation with
Kate Zambreno

In partnership with The Writing Program at Columbia School of the Arts and the American Library in Paris

Commencement

Congratulations to the Class of 2021!

The Columbia University Commencement ceremony of the 267th academic year took place on April 30, via web broadcast.

Graduating students, family, and friends, tuned in to the celebration from around the world. Many international students convened at a number of Global Centers and WeWork sites, from Paris to Beijing to Shanghai, donning their regalia for photos and memories that will last a lifetime.

The Global Centers Directors and teams shared a [video message](#) wishing the class of 2021 well and congratulating them on completing their studies, especially in such unprecedented times. An archived video of the full virtual ceremony and digital program are [available for viewing](#).

Columbia's Commencement ceremony dates back to 1758 and has been held outdoors on the Morningside campus since 1926.



Leading up to Commencement, Columbia Global Centers | Amman was lit up in blue to mark the occasion.



●
COLUMBIA
GLOBAL CENTERS
| AMMAN





Columbia Global Centers | Amman was established in March 2009 as one of the first in the network of Columbia Global Centers.

The Center was launched under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah. With its headquarters in Amman, Jordan, the Center serves as a hub for programs and educational initiatives throughout the Middle East and as a conduit for local, regional, and global knowledge, expertise, and networks. As an intellectual and physical infrastructure for Columbia University, the Amman Center facilitates knowledge exchange and skill development and provides faculty and students with opportunities to expand their research and scholarship.

Often referred to as a city of refuge, Amman has experienced impressive urban growth over the past fifty years driven by forced displacements, changing geopolitical conditions, and large influxes of capital. Developing from a small rural settlement at the end of the 19th century into a regional crossroad, the capital city is now home to over four million inhabitants.

On March 18, 2020, Jordan went into total lockdown, as did much of the rest of the world. The international airport in the country's capital was shut down, and would not reopen until September. For almost two months, those residing in the country could leave their homes only by foot to nearby locations for essential errands.

An initial strict lockdown helped Jordan effectively control the spread of the pandemic, with daily case numbers in the single and double digits. But come September and the easing of lockdown measures over the summer, the country started to experience its first real wave. The highest daily number of recorded cases reached nearly 8,000 in November 2020 during the first wave and close to 10,000 in March 2021 during the second wave. Jordan has recorded, to date, approximately 750,000 COVID cases, out of a population of 10 million. As of July 2021, the country has administered nearly 4.3 million vaccination doses.

For much of the past year, citizens spent their Fridays in lockdown, confined to their homes and immediate neighborhoods. Despite all the challenges this brought about, especially for restaurants and smaller businesses, for many Jordanians, the Friday calm was reminiscent of older and quainter times.

Just a couple of days before the March '20 lockdown went into effect, we hosted renowned former op-ed columnist, author, and current *New York Times* Paris Bureau Chief, Roger Cohen, for a [fascinating lecture](#) on America's abdication of its historic role in the Middle East—what would be our last in-person event.

Responding to feedback about his deeply moving [op-ed](#) and [podcast](#), *Come Back, New York, All is Forgiven*, Roger gave us insight into how a great columnist approaches his work.

"I had a cadence or meter in my head as I wrote, and the idea presented itself to me in that form... I've often thought the columns that work best are those that start with an idea and then have a twist, or turning, about two-thirds of the way down. One idea, in other words, is not quite enough."

He continued, *"As I wrote, it suddenly occurred to me that not only should I forgive the city [New York City], but the city should forgive me, forgive all of us, for not appreciating its majesty and magic, for cursing it sometimes, for wanting out. Forgive me as I forgive you. I did not have this idea at the outset. It took me through the last few (para)graphs, which wrote themselves, and led me to the final sentence, I know we can make a deal."*

Roger's words felt applicable to more than his own writing craft. In our new environment, we all had to twist, or pivot—at our jobs, our home life, and in our broader communities—to fulfill our purpose. For the Amman Center and the rest of Columbia's Global Centers network, that meant developing a full slate of online programming and adapting our skills to a new format.

Our transformation was swift, made possible by our founding DNA, which was designed to be responsive. Almost immediately, we shifted our focus to virtual conversations, where we attempted to continue to engage our audiences with regional and Columbia-wide expertise and to feature the world-class knowledge and programming our friends had come to expect and enjoy from us.

We look forward to hosting in-person events again, and to welcoming back to the Center all our regular audience members, when conditions permit. We have certainly missed seeing you all!

Moving Beyond COVID-19's Shadow

Safwan M. Masri

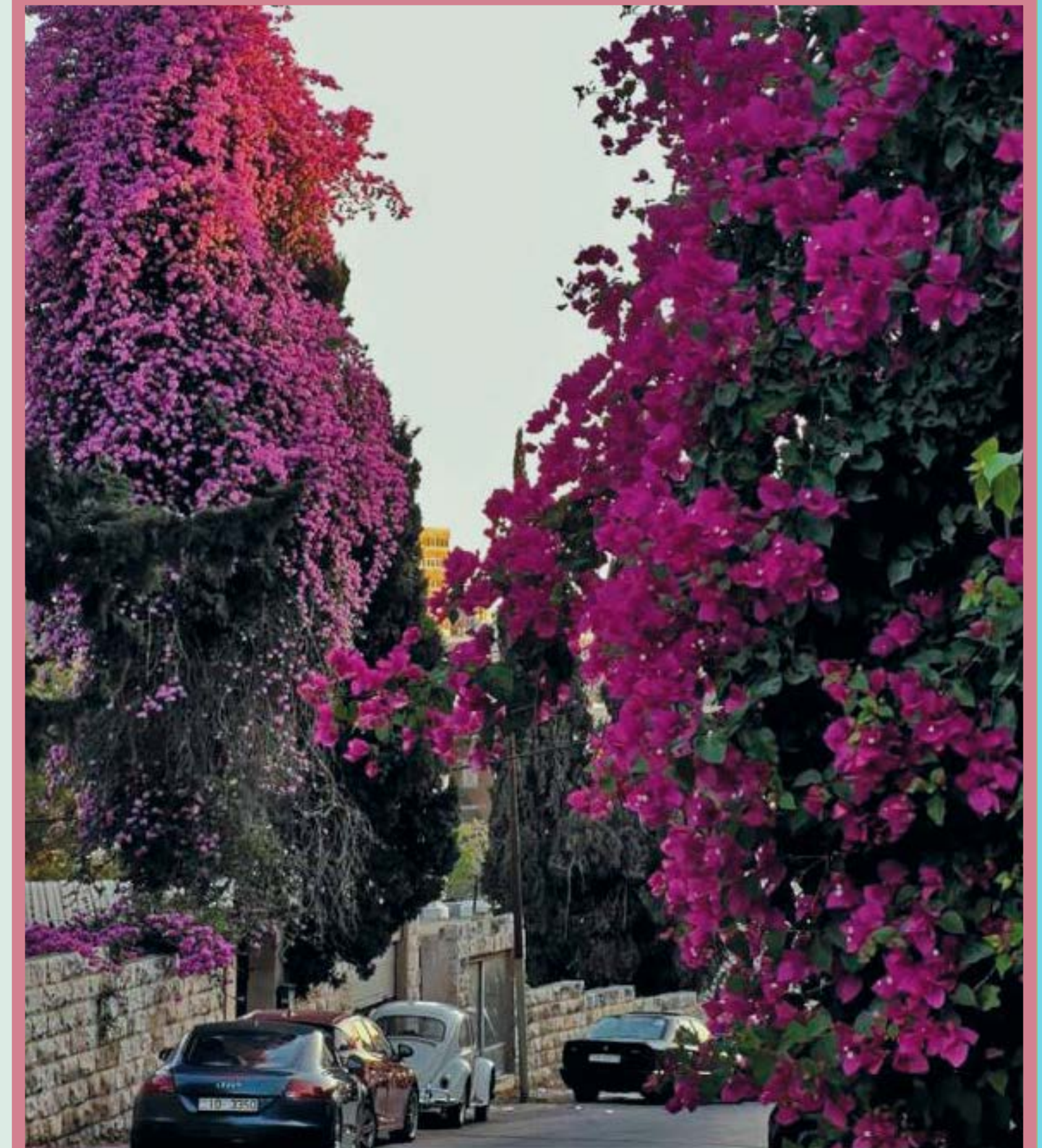
With Jordan's border sealed and curfew enforced those first six weeks in Spring 2020, the pace of life in Amman stood still and the noise of urban life ceased. Into the quiet, I began a daily ritual: hour-long strolls in the mornings, before the peak of heat, to explore alleyways, rolling hills, winding streets, and to admire the Jericho stone architecture of the unique, balconied homes with their expansive gardens in my neighborhood. In 15 years of having a home here, I had never truly seen these details—the lines and curves and angles that frame our days.

My new, ritual walks have not succumbed to routine. I am led to discoveries, the most treasured of which are the gardens in my neighborhood that are bursting with fragrant eucalyptus trees, black irises and bougainvillea bushes, which cascade over walls, their branches heavy with jasmine blossoms. In Arabic, the bougainvillea are called *Majnouneh*, “the crazy one.” It will not be contained. How had I not seen this before? Now when I pause to absorb and admire, the owners who tend these gardens appear, and invite me to sit, share a coffee, trade stories.

These walks have been a portal to the Amman of my childhood. Smaller, quainter, neighborly, an era and way of life lost to decades of rapid development. Even the daily calls to prayer, a repeated soundtrack of every Muslim country, is a throwback to my youth. With so many mosques now closed because of COVID, the usual calls to prayer over static-filled loudspeakers have ceased. In their place, only one

muezzin, with a voice exquisite and pure. Chosen, no doubt, because he is the best. The sound feels elemental and timeless, and yet binds me to this world, to our stories and memories, hopes and dreams, as well as to our sorrows and losses.

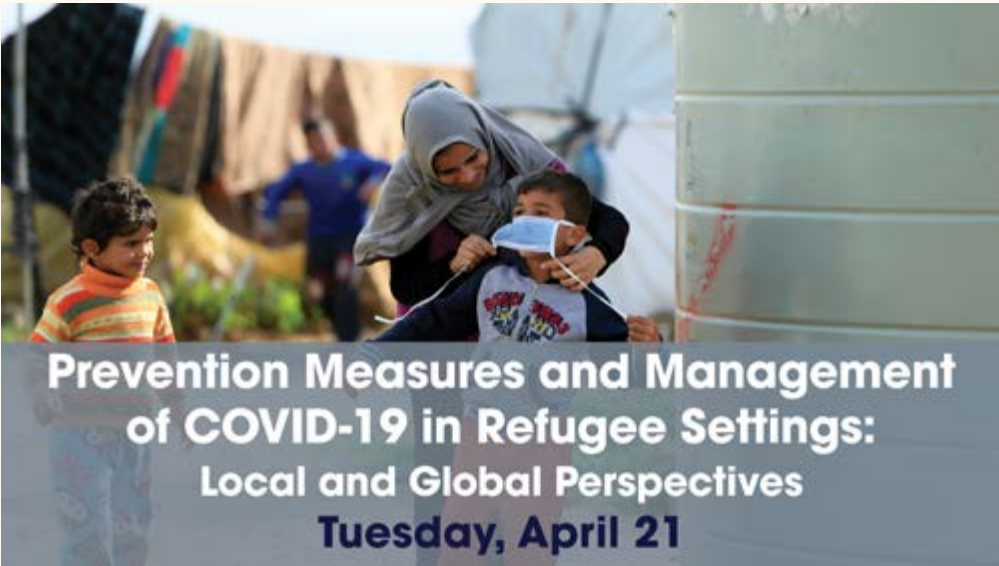
Several times a day now, my new COVID world conspires to remind me to give thanks—for the people, for nature, for history, for the moment. This is my respite, and my antidote to the other reality we are all living with, the devastation of this pandemic. I want now to not only think of the future as a time when this pandemic is safely consigned to the past, I want to continue to see as I have here in Amman. COVID has destroyed so much, and revealed inequities and injustices. Our lives, our work and our communities are transforming in its wake. I hope that we choose to transform in the direction I have been walking toward: renewed appreciation, connections, neighbors, stories, shared life.



This is part of a Columbia News series, titled Lessons Learned, which invites the Columbia community to reflect on the pandemic and the insights they have gained from their COVID-19 experience. These essays speak to the innovation, creativity, and resourcefulness we have witnessed during this period of unprecedented challenge, as well as some of the silver linings in the actions we have had to take by necessity.

We organized countless webinars during 2020-2021 featuring expertise from Columbia University and the region on topics ranging from mental health, to Edtech, to Islamophobia, to the pandemic's impact on Jordan's economy.

Highlights of some of our webinars



April 21, 2020

Prevention Measures and Management of COVID-19 in Refugee Settings: Global and Local Perspectives

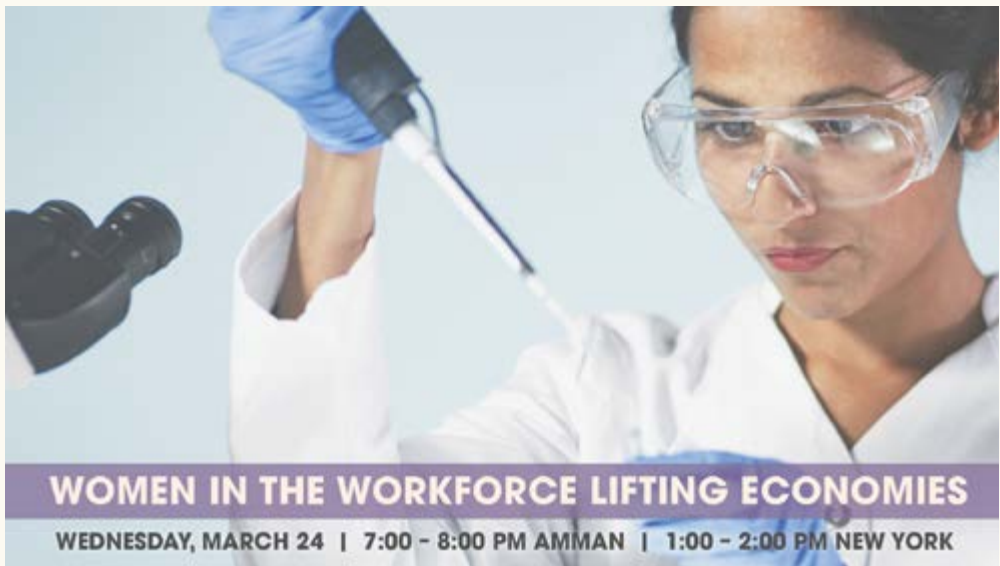
This webinar discussed policy responses to COVID-19 in refugee contexts in Jordan and Lebanon at the start of the pandemic and how support continued to reach people most in need. Organized in partnership with UNHCR MENA and Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health's Program on Forced Migration and Health.



July 2020

Wisdom Encoded: The Digital Kalila wa-Dimna

AnonymClassic, an ERC-funded project at the Freie Universität Berlin, created a digital edition of the complicated text of *Kalila wa-Dimna* with a massive manuscript tradition. This series introduced the project to a broader audience through a keynote conversation and three consecutive academic workshops, and was led by Matthew Keegan, Moinian Assistant Professor in Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures at Barnard College, Columbia University.



March 24, 2021

Women in the Workforce Lifting Economies

This webinar highlighted women's current experiences in the Jordanian economy and aimed to promote a rethinking of women's roles. The discussion, moderated by Mary Nazzal, Barnard '01, Chairperson of 17 Ventures and Founder of Landmark Hotels, focused on how to maximize women's impact and resilience in Jordan's long-term recovery.

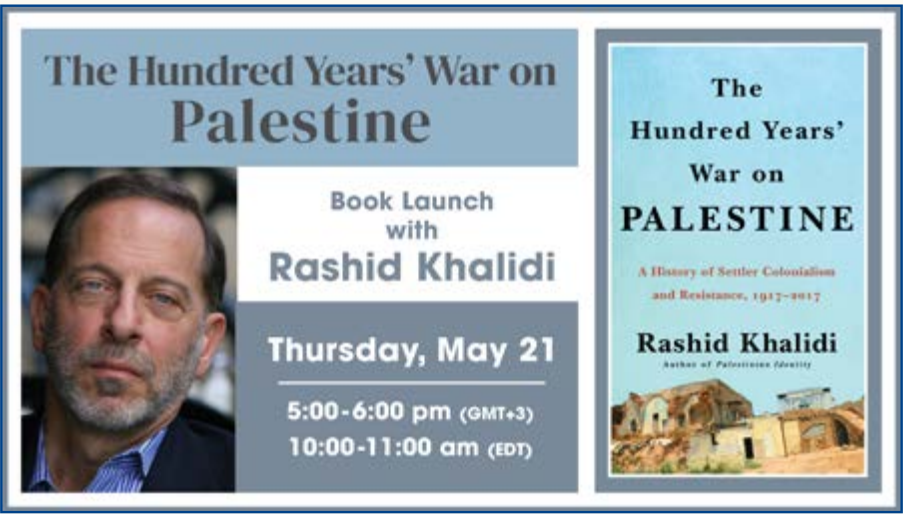


April 23, 2021

U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East Under the Biden Administration

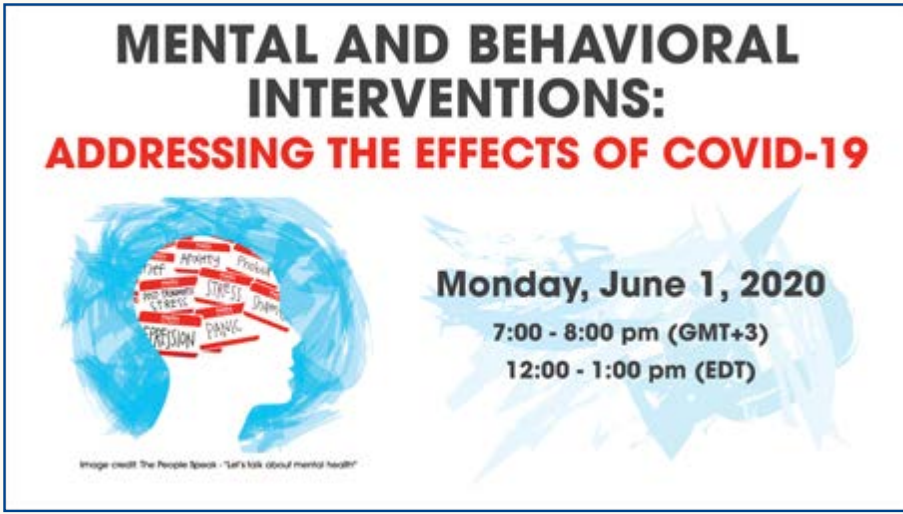
This webinar brought together experts to discuss the potential strategic shifts and foreign policy changes that may be expected in the Middle East and North Africa region from the Biden Administration, and what significant foreign policy changes will be undertaken. The discussion was moderated by David Gardner, International Affairs Editor at the *Financial Times*.

ADDITIONAL WEBINARS ORGANIZED



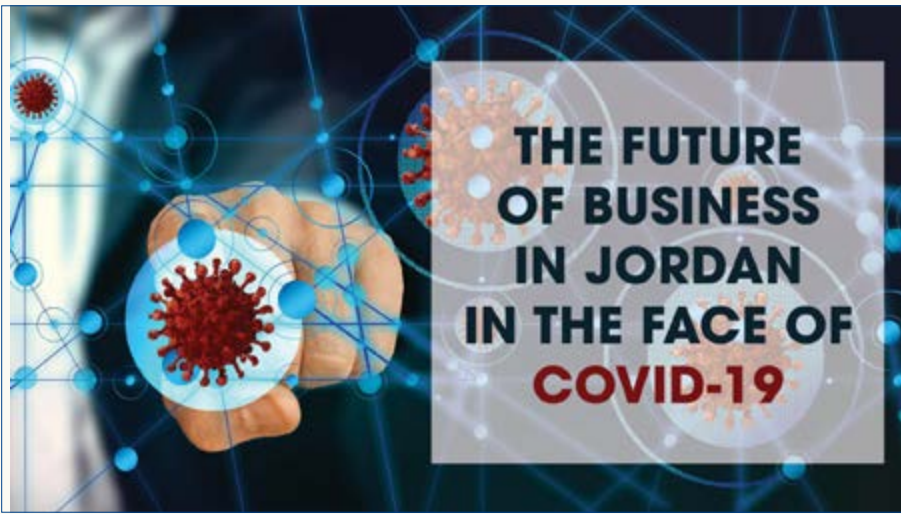
May 21, 2020

[The Hundred Years' War on Palestine](#)
In partnership with Columbia Global Centers | Istanbul and Columbia Global Centers | Tunis



June 1, 2020

[Mental and Behavioral Interventions: Addressing the Effects of COVID-19](#)



June 17 & September 9, 2020

[Webinar Series on the Impact of COVID-19 on Jordan's Economy](#)



June 23, 2020

[Teaching and Curating Art During a Time of Pandemic](#)



June 30, 2020

[Edtech and its Roadmap to New Realities](#)
In partnership with WAMDA



July 8, 2020

[Transitioning to a Low-Carbon Energy Future in the Middle East](#)
In partnership with the Center on Global Energy Policy, School of International and Public Affairs



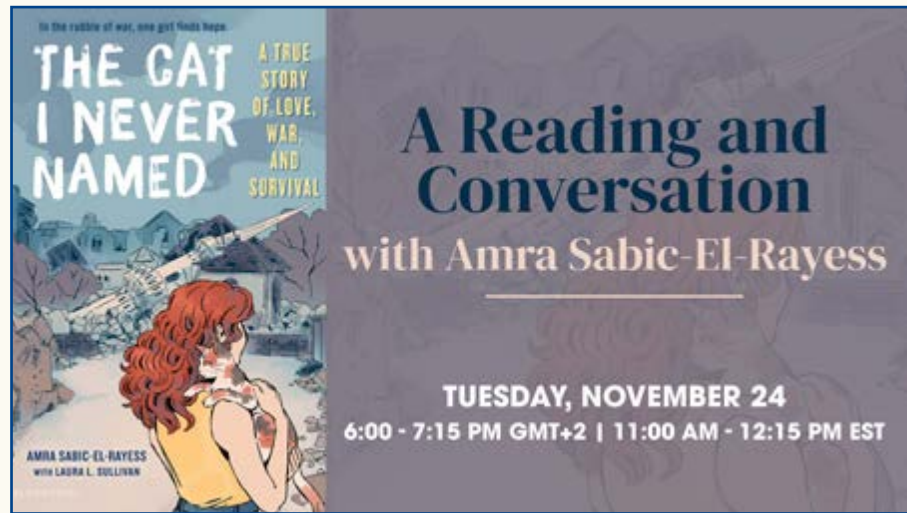
July 15, 2020

[The New Nomadic Age: Archaeologies of Forced and Undocumented Migration](#)



October 27, 2020

[COVID-19 Vaccination and Treatment: Developments and Implications](#)
In partnership with Columbia Global Centers | Santiago



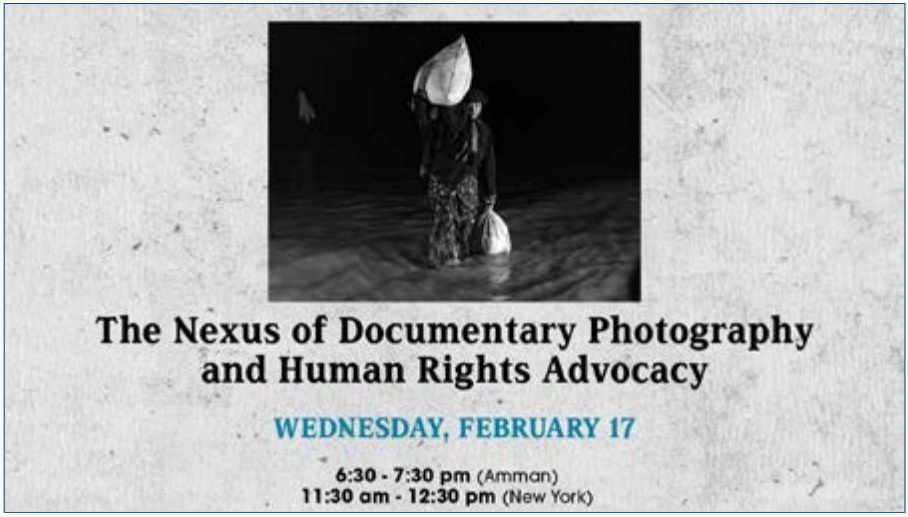
November 24, 2020

[The Cat I Never Named: A True Story of Love, War, and Survival](#)



December 11 & 14, 2020

[Countering Islamophobia Through Education](#)
In partnership with Columbia Global Centers | Tunis, Columbia Global Centers | Istanbul, Teachers College, and the Middle East Institute at Columbia University



February 17, 2021

[The Nexus of Documentary Photography and Human Rights Advocacy](#)



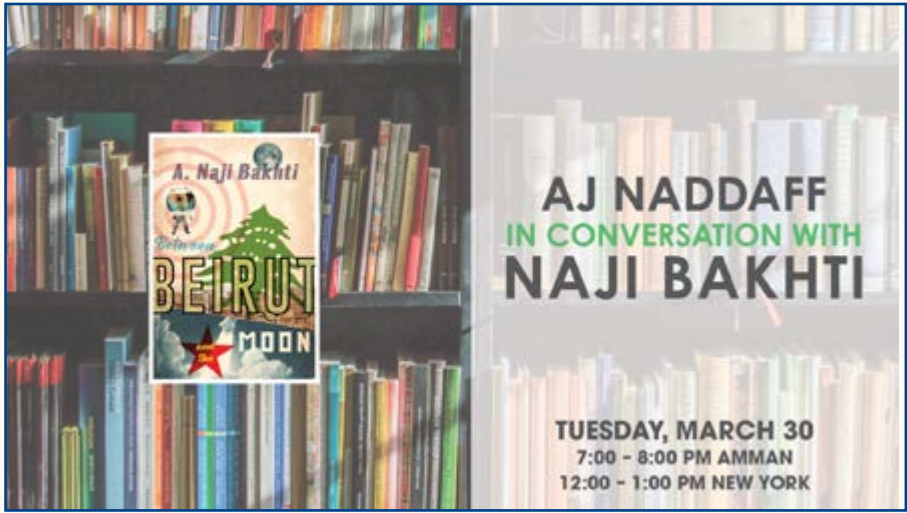
March 3, 2021

[Equitable Access to COVID-19 Vaccine: Challenges and Solutions](#)

In partnership with Columbia Global Centers | Istanbul and Columbia Global Centers | Tunis

A SERIES OF BOOK TALKS WITH ARAB AUTHORS

In partnership with the Center for Palestine Studies and Middle East Institute at Columbia University



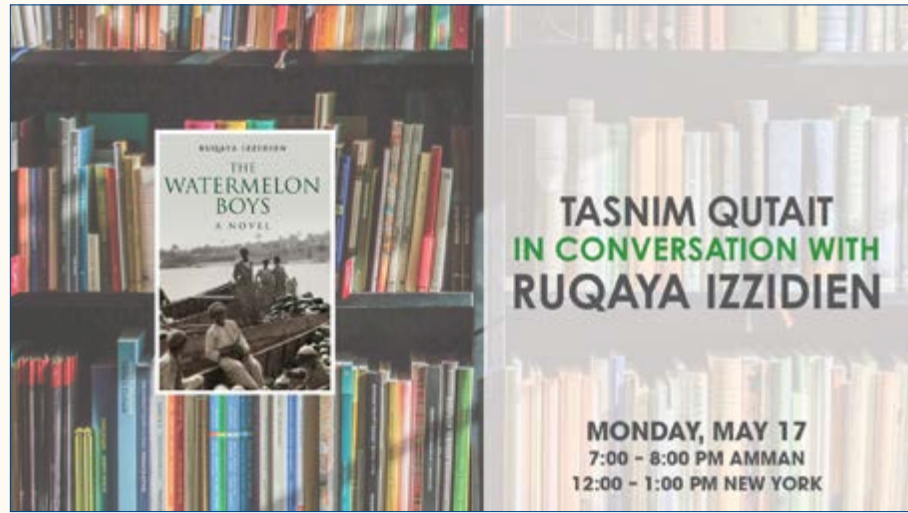
March 30, 2021

[Between Beirut and the Moon](#)



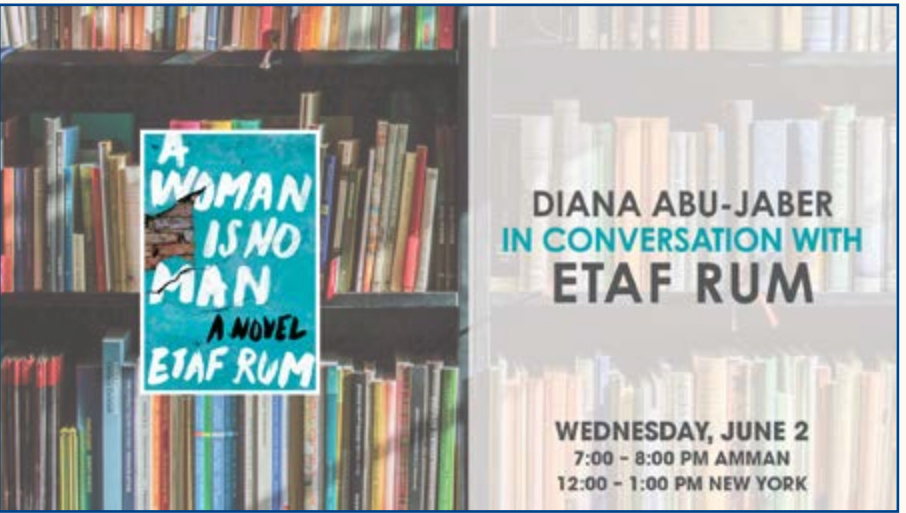
April 6, 2021

[Silence is a Sense and The Pact We Made](#)



May 17, 2021

[The Watermelon Boys](#)



June 2, 2021

[A Woman is No Man](#)

Earth Day 2021

To celebrate Earth Day, we highlighted environmental-related initiatives that have an impact in Jordan and beyond. In line with this year’s theme, “Restore Our Earth,” we aimed to showcase and raise awareness on the work environmental leaders and activists are doing to help further climate action.

We spoke with...

Krystle Cooper, Senior Climate Finance Officer,
Global Green Growth Institute

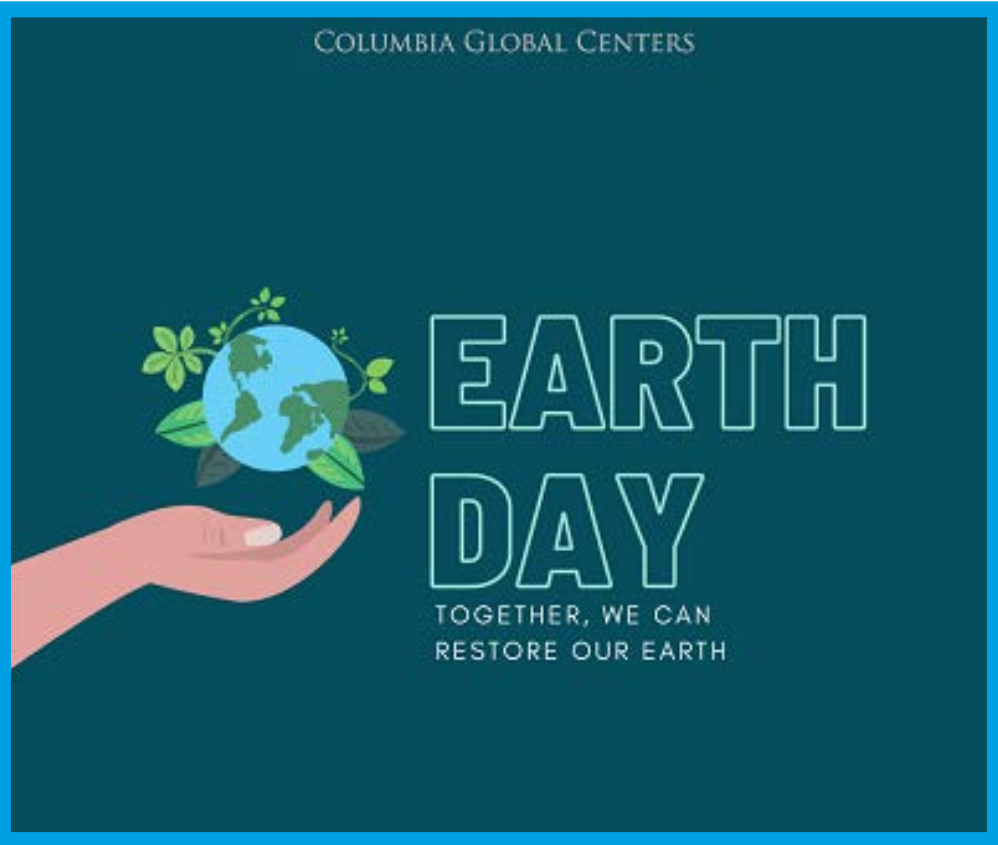
Yehya Khaled, Director General, The Royal Society for the
Conservation of Nature

Kishan Khoday, Regional Team Leader for Nature,
Climate and Energy (Arab Region), UNDP

Dureid Mahasneh, Founder and Chairman, EDAMA

Maria Nissan, Environmental Artist

Shada El-Sharif, Founder, SustainMENA



Earth Day vignettes

●

PROGRAMMING AND RESEARCH SUPPORT: PRE-PANDEMIC AND BEYOND



In the following pages, we offer you a glimpse of our research and programming highlights spanning from 2018 to 2020, with a focus on two of our thematic areas: **Forced Migration and Displacement** and **Youth and Entrepreneurship**.

Forced Migration and Displacement

Today, global society is facing an uncertain future and existential challenges. Perhaps no issue has loomed larger in recent years than the historic migration of people. The United Nations estimates that more than 82 million people are currently living as refugees or asylum-seekers, or have been internally displaced due to wars and natural calamity—the largest such population in human history.

Syria, with its border fewer than a hundred miles from Columbia's Global Center in Amman, has been at the epicenter of this crisis. The immediacy and proximity of the Amman Center has allowed for a rapid deployment of academic resources to help deliver impact and is reflective of Columbia University's commitment to better understand global challenges and help address and alleviate them where possible.

Over the years, Columbia Global Centers | Amman has become a hub on forced migration and displacement at both an academic and policy level. The Center has deepened engagement with local partners, international organizations, regional universities, and the Jordanian government to facilitate knowledge exchange between academia and practitioners. Through a multidisciplinary approach and a range of initiatives, some of which are outlined in the coming pages, we have supported the development of local capacity in research and data collection to address operational agencies' programming and advocacy needs to inform policy recommendations.





[Aerial view of Zaatari Camp in Northern Jordan]

Women Advancing Solutions in Policy Implementation, Research, and Engagement for Refugees (Women ASPIRE)



In partnership with The University of Jordan, the Institute for Family Health, and the International Rescue Committee, the Center conducted a research study aimed to understand the gendered health and mental health concerns of Syrian refugee women living in non-camp urban settings throughout Jordan. It involved a cross-sectional survey distributed to hundreds of women over a period of six months, in which the findings informed intervention approaches and policies to develop comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, and improve health outcomes for Syrian refugee women in Jordan.

The study was spearheaded by leading faculty at Columbia’s School of Social Work including Nabila El-Bassel, University Professor and Willma and Albert Musher Professor of Social Work; Neeraj Kaushal, Professor of Social Policy; and Anindita Dasgupta, Postdoctoral Research Scientist.



[Learn more](#) about this project from the researchers involved in it.

In My Own Hands: A Medium-Term Approach Towards Self-Reliance and Resilience of Syrian Refugees and Host Communities in Jordan



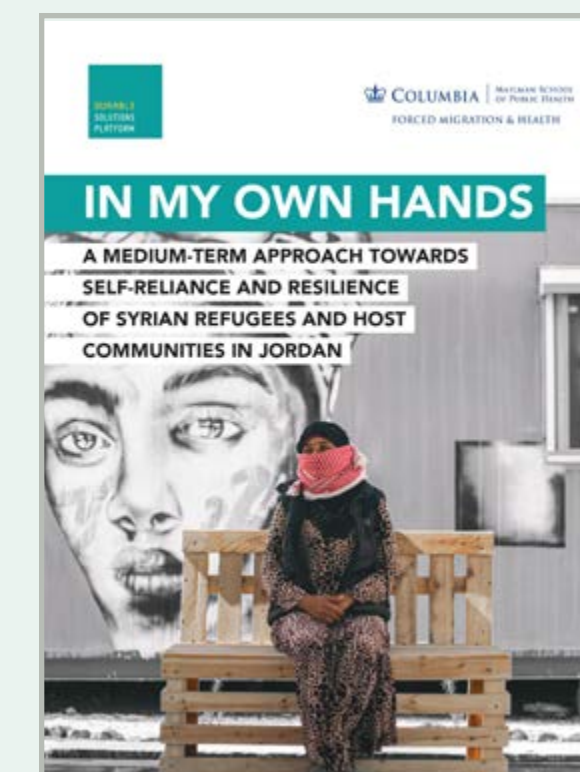
As refugee assistance programs adapted to address medium- and longer-term needs, this research project explored how Syrian refugees' self-reliance can be fostered to promote resilience and social cohesion with host communities. The project, led by Monette Zard, Allan Rosenfield Associate Professor of Forced Migration and Health and Director of the Program on Forced Migration and Health at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, explored lessons learned and ways forward for Syrian refugees' protracted displacement in Jordan.

The research report highlights areas where strategic investments in policy and practice can be made to ensure that refugee access to education, livelihoods, and social assistance can be leveraged to address the needs of vulnerable populations and ensure better lives for all. A sustainable refugee response was crafted that strengthens national systems to support the self-reliance and resilience of both displaced Syrians and host communities.

The project was done in collaboration with the Durable Solutions Platform and the Program on Forced Migration and Health at Columbia University.



[Learn more](#) about this project from Monette Zard, Director of the Program on Forced Migration and Health at Columbia University.



[Report](#)

"Self-reliance is the true essence, for a human to feel himself and feel stability – if I'd rely on you and I wouldn't know when you'd cut aid from me, I wouldn't be prepared. I wouldn't be prepared psychologically, I'd be frustrated, because the decision would be yours, so I want my decision to be mine, in my own hands, the decision of my children – how to feed them, how to dress them, how to pay my rent."

Syrian refugee man in East Amman

Workshop for Journalists on Early Childhood Development, Trauma, and Resilience

In collaboration with the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma at Columbia Journalism School, the Amman Center held a training workshop in January 2019 designed to build capacity for journalists covering the Syrian refugee crisis and response and to illustrate real life experiences bringing to light stories that desperately need to be told, heard, and seen.

The four-day workshop, led by Bruce Shapiro, Executive Director of the Dart Center, brought together 22 journalists from 16 different countries including correspondents from TV and radio reporters, photojournalists, newspaper reporters, and multimedia journalists. Workshop participants told stories of displaced people who witnessed war and examined the impact of conflict on

refugee children and reporters alike. The workshop deepened participants' understanding about the neuroscience of adversity and trauma, and provided them with tools on how to report on children in distress and help them thrive under stressful situations. Many of the participating journalists have lived in situations of conflict, and therefore presented their personal experiences when reporting on similar refugee crises.

A keynote speech was delivered by Her Royal Highness Princess Rym Ali JN '94, Founder of the Jordan Media Institute.



Health Status and Reproductive Health Among Postpartum Syrian Refugee Women in Jordan

This project, spearheaded by Jennifer Dohrn, Associate Professor of Nursing at Columbia University Medical Center, examined the health status, reproductive health knowledge, attitudes, and practices of postpartum Syrian refugee women who live outside of formal camps in host communities across Jordan.

The aim was to better understand the health needs and reproductive health practices of these women for the purpose of sharing recommendations and informing policy directions to provide reproductive health services more reflective of their voices and responsive to their needs. The project was carried out in partnership with the schools of nursing at Columbia University and the University of Jordan.



[Listen](#) to Jennifer Dohrn, Associate Professor of Nursing at Columbia University Medical Center, talk about this project.



[Report](#)

Illness and Urban Displacement: Addressing the Needs of Refugees with Non-communicable Diseases

A qualitative study was undertaken to provide an overview of the healthcare experience of Syrian refugees with non-communicable diseases (NCDs) residing in Jordan. The study paid specific attention to urban refugees’ personal perspectives about illness, approaches to healthcare decision making, operational barriers faced while accessing care, reflections on healthcare quality, and methods for coping with challenges of healthcare access and quality.

Findings of the research study were presented at Columbia Global Centers | Amman by Dr. Fouad Fouad, Assistant Professor of Public Health Practice at the American University of Beirut, and Zahirah McNatt, Senior Research Associate at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health. Results were discussed to foster dialogue among stakeholders about how to improve the accessibility and quality of NCD services for refugees in non-camp settings.

The study was a collaborative effort among Columbia Global Centers | Amman, International Rescue Committee in Jordan, and the Department of Population and Family Health at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University.



[Report](#)

Mellon Fellowship Program

Refugee scholars face specific challenges that often limit the advancement of their academic work and inhibit their positive contribution to the scholarly community in host countries and around the world.

In partnership with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Columbia Global Centers | Amman established the Mellon Fellowship Program to support emerging displaced scholars and create opportunities for them to reintegrate into academia and resume their scholarly pursuits. The program offers 12-month fellowships for up to 25 emerging displaced scholars working in the humanities and humanistic social sciences, over a period of four years. These scholars are PhD students and post-doctoral fellows who were forcibly uprooted from their home countries and respective academic institutions for reasons related to the emergence of security concerns and armed conflict.

The program involves a mentorship component whereby each fellow is matched with a relevant faculty member

at Columbia University who helps them plan academic activities, conduct research and identify research sources, establish a professional peer network, and publish their work. Mentors are there to help scholars successfully navigate the journey through the fellowship program, and to inspire and guide them to reach their full potential in a supportive environment where they learn the essential methodologies, concepts, and wider context of their discipline.

The program is meant to generate the conditions to accelerate the development of emerging scholars’ work and research by providing them with access to educational resources, building their professional networks, harnessing their expertise, and promoting them as an asset to the global academic community. It serves to nurture fellows in a scholarly ecosystem and provide additional or alternative pathways to advance their research and help them embark on viable career paths in academia or other sectors serving the public good.

The first cohort of the program in 2019-2020 included five scholars:

Sameer Abdulrazzaq
The Prosodic Morphology of Arabic
Academic Mentor: **Muhsin al-Musawi**, Professor of Classical and Modern Arabic Literature, Comparative, and Cultural Studies, Columbia University

Teoman Aktan
Discourse Analysis and Comparison of the New Social Movements in Iran
Academic Mentor: **Hamid Dabashi**, Hagop Kevorkian Professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Literature, Columbia University

Mabruk Derbesh
The Impact of Political Change on the State of Academia including Academic Freedom in the Arab World: Libya as a Case Study
Academic Mentor: **Timothy Mitchell**, William B. Ransford Professor of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies and of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University

Nahed Ghazzoul
Blended Learning: Models for Promoting Professional Development of Displaced Syrian Academics and English Teachers Living in Jordan
Academic Mentor: **Mary Mendenhall**, Associate Professor of Practice, Teachers College

Ahmed Fatima Kzzo
Cylinder Seals in Ebla (Syria) during the Second Millennium B.C.
Academic Mentor: **Zainab Bahrani**, Edith Porada Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Art and Archaeology, Columbia University

The second cohort of the program currently includes five scholars:

Rand Abu Ackl
The Representations of the Last Judgment in Syria and Lebanon, Detailed Analyses, and a Comparative Study
Academic Mentor: **Holger Klein**, Lisa and Bernard Selz Professor of Medieval Art History, Columbia University

Mohamad Alabsi
Political Philosophy and State Theory: Relationship and Dependency between Regime and State in the Arab World and the Middle East
Academic Mentor: **Lisa Anderson**, James T. Shotwell Professor Emerita of International Relations and Dean Emerita of the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University

Lina Alzouabi
The Life Condition of Syrian Asylum Seekers in Jordan's Governorates Outside Camps and the Motives to Immigrate to Europe
Academic Mentor: **Goleen Samari**, Assistant Professor of Population and Family Health, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University

Tareq Awwad
The Relationship between Syrians and Archaeological Sites and Post-Conflict Changes
Academic Mentor: **Brian Boyd**, Lecturer and Director of Museum Anthropology and Co-Director, Center for Palestine Studies, Columbia University

Abdulgaleel Mohammed
Issues in the Syntax of Modern Standard Arabic: A Cartographic-Minimalist Account
Academic Mentor: **Taoufik Ben-Amor**, Gordon Gray Jr. Senior Lecturer in Arabic Studies, Columbia University



Ahmed Fatima Kzzo

I left Syria in 2008 to earn my PhD from The Sapienza University of Rome, which I completed in 2013. I also worked there as a supervisor for the program in Archaeology and Art History of the Ancient Near East. My plan was to go back home to Aleppo and teach at a local university, but when the war started in 2011, I could not return. I spent a year and a half at the University of Bern in Switzerland as a postdoc doing research on cylinder seals.

I learned about the Mellon Fellowship Program in Amman through an announcement I received from Agade, a global mailing list for archaeologists of the Ancient Near East. I was accepted into the program and relocated to Jordan at the end of 2019. My fellowship at Columbia's Global Center in Amman was fruitful, despite the challenges brought on by the COVID pandemic. The workplace is beautiful, peaceful, and inclusive.

My research focus is on Middle Bronze age glyptic art, and I am also interested in cultural heritage and the construction of national identities. During the one year fellowship, I continued my research on the study of cylinder seals from Ebla, one of earliest kingdoms in Syria located southwest of Aleppo, during the second millennium B.C.

I also worked incredibly hard on a book, *"Racconto d'Egitto. Trascrizione e traduzione del manoscritto di 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baġdādī (con brevi note di commento),"* published in October 2020 by Archaeopress, Oxford. The book consists of the first Italian translation of an Arab manuscript dated to 1204 AD about Egypt.

My mentor, Zainab Bahrani, was invaluable to me throughout the fellowship. She is a renowned archaeologist and art historian who opened up her networks to me and connected me with other scholars. Her support was crucial, and we continue to be in contact.

Since the completion of my fellowship, I was a visiting researcher at the University of Zürich from February to May 2021. Then I moved to Hamburg, where I am currently giving an online course on "Archaeology, Museums, and Identities in the Middle East," hosted by the University of Potsdam.

Columbia University Scholarship for Displaced Students

A significant number of refugees and asylum-seekers have had their education interrupted, severely impacting their potential for future success. The Columbia University Scholarship for Displaced Students is an effort to combat this unprecedented humanitarian and economic loss by providing displaced students with the opportunity to pursue higher education at Columbia University. It is the first scholarship in Columbia's 267-year history that unifies all of its schools and affiliates, and it is the first scholarship of its kind and scope anywhere in the world.

The program admits up to thirty students annually—refugees, asylees, internally displaced individuals or those with temporary protected status—to over 150 degree programs across the University. The inaugural cohort, admitted in the fall of 2020, is comprised of 18 students from 13 countries, enrolled in 12 degree programs at Columbia. Students receive full tuition, housing, and living assistance while pursuing undergraduate or graduate degrees across all 18 Columbia schools and affiliates, reflecting Columbia's full institutional commitment to addressing this global crisis.

A pilot of this scholarship program was first initiated in the midst of the Syrian refugee crisis under the direction of Bruce Usher, Co-Director of the Tamer Center for Social Enterprise at Columbia Business School.

The Columbia Scholarship for Displaced Students aims to be a leader in filling this pressing humanitarian need and encourages other universities to follow suit. Our hope is to also change the dialogue in the United States and elsewhere surrounding displaced persons, from one that views them as a burden to one that recognizes them as vital contributors to global innovation and prosperity.

Learn more about this Scholarship program and [listen](#) to our students' stories.

If you are interested in supporting scholarship efforts for displaced students at Columbia University, we invite you to learn more [here](#).



Entrepreneurship and Youth

Rapid change and uncertainty have become an increasing feature of global realities. What does the future look like for the world's young people who will inherit the burdens of global climate change, political polarizations, and wide-spread economic and health disparity as well as the promises and dilemmas of digital technologies and global interconnectedness?

The Middle East and North Africa is one of the most youthful regions in the world, with a median age of 22 years. With nearly 60% of the population in many countries under 25 years old, the nature of the region must rapidly develop to meet the demands countries will face in coming decades. The MENA region's youth have the potential to become agents of change and contribute to a more prosperous and stable future for themselves and their communities. Unleashing this potential, however, requires a robust investment in the creation of meaningful learning and engagement opportunities.

Columbia Global Centers | Amman runs a number of initiatives that aim to promote and advance youth leadership development in Jordan and the wider region. Through talks and interactive workshops, participants learn how to turn their personal interests and hobbies into careers or businesses, develop specific skills, and inspire, influence, and motivate others to encourage effective leadership. With the support of a number of Columbia schools and campus partners, the Amman Center has been able to generate successful education and entrepreneurial activities in various parts of the region.

Fostering Entrepreneurship in Engineering Education in Tunisia

This project aimed to strengthen the culture of entrepreneurship in engineering education in Tunisia by introducing critical elements of an entrepreneurship curriculum and training faculty to become entrepreneurship educators and coaches to increase opportunities for student learning. It was recognized as one of the more successful university partnership projects for its efforts in strengthening collaboration between public and private higher education institutions, and for the establishment of partnerships between public engineering schools and the start-up and business community.

As a result, the initiative was scaled up to include the participation of 100 universities from across Tunisia, in addition to being expanded to Morocco and potentially elsewhere in the region. The program has

helped foster a collaborative ecosystem to support entrepreneurial activities in the Tunisian context by increasing the number of certified coaches and embedding the ideation process in local universities. Primarily, the program supported interdisciplinary founding teams comprised of Tunisian students through two stages of a national open start-up competition in Tunisia and prepared them to compete in the technology track of the Columbia Venture Competition. These students were connected to a global network of entrepreneurs from Columbia University and in New York. Overall, the program trained nearly 300 students.

The project is organized in partnership with Columbia University's School of Engineering and Applied Science, Columbia Business School, Open Start-up Tunisia, and Columbia Global Centers | Tunis, and was funded by a grant from the U.S. Embassy in Tunis.



Social Entrepreneurship Workshop for High School Students

A five-day workshop on social entrepreneurship is held each summer at the Amman Center in partnership with Building Blocks, a student-run organization working to inspire, educate, and launch the next generation of student entrepreneurs. The workshop aims to give high school students the opportunity to examine themes of gender

equality, entrepreneurship, innovation, leadership, design thinking, and sustainable development.

Participants learn about how entrepreneurship is changing the world and get the chance to engage with successful entrepreneurs who share their lessons as master innovators. Working in teams, students collectively design ventures

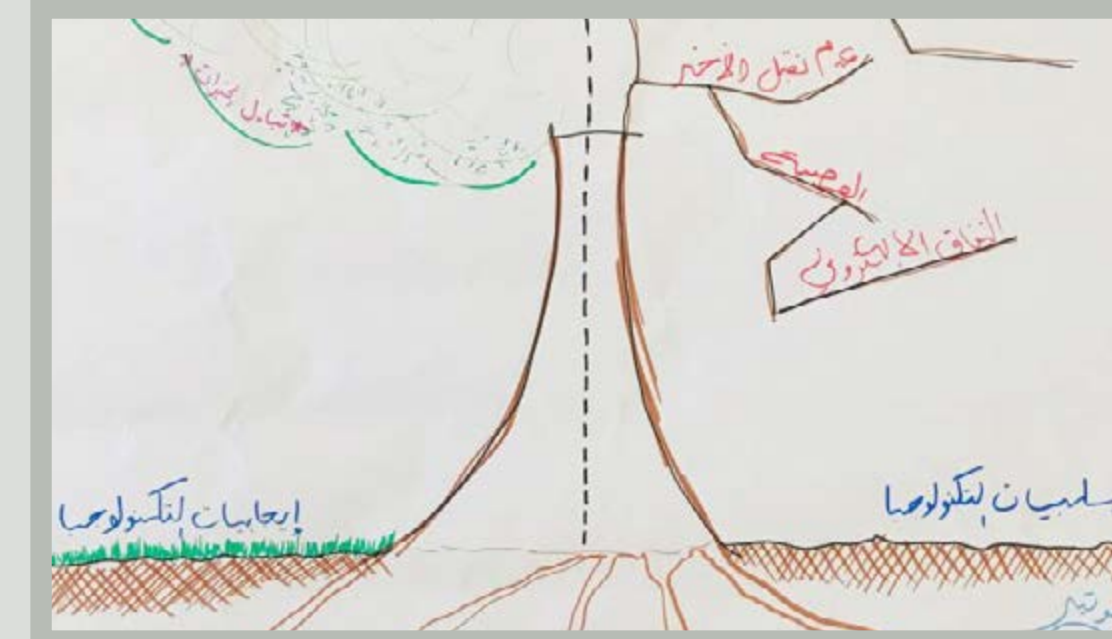
and present them at the conclusion of the program. The third and fourth iterations of this program, in Summer 2020 and 2021, have been adapted to an online format.

The workshop is part of the Center's Soraya Salti Youth for Youth Series inspired by the legacy of the late Soraya Salti, former President and CEO for Middle East and North Africa at INJAZ Al-Arab.



Youth in a Changing World

Youth in a Changing World is an initiative to identify current global issues of greatest concern to youth involving a series of global workshops where they discuss among themselves how their future aspirations are affecting and being affected by a rapidly changing world. The initiative is spearheaded by Vishaka Desai, Chair of the Committee on Global Thought and Senior Advisor for Global Affairs to the President of Columbia University, and works through the network of Columbia Global Centers around the world, and with local universities and youth organizations. In Jordan, local partners included The School of Graduate Studies at Jordan University and the Princess Basma Youth Resource Center.



"Digital Technologies, Identity, and Belonging" Collective Drawing

These workshops include focus group discussions, where local youth facilitators moderate conversations with their peers around thematic open-ended questions. Each peer-led focus group ends with a collective drawing exercise, in which they create an image around their conversation. Collective drawings offer participants freedom to play with artistic expression to shape and convey their own narratives and understandings.

Conversations held so far have revealed that young people everywhere acutely feel the need for a platform to express themselves and have themselves heard and that they are able to think simultaneously in personal, local, and global terms.



"Security and Wellbeing" Collective Drawing

Conferences and Workshops

The Amman Center cooperates with partners on campus and in the region to organize conferences and workshops featuring international scholars and regional experts that focus on a variety of relevant issues. These events promote academic dialogue and help solidify the Center’s presence in the region as a focal point of intellectual engagement.

The Future of the Past: Addressing the Cultural Heritage Crisis in Iraq and Syria

January 18-19, 2020

In partnership with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the fourth regional joint cultural heritage workshop was hosted in Amman, bringing together museum specialists and conservators from Iraq, Libya, and Jordan, as well as colleagues from Europe, Australia, and North America.

The workshops are thinking groups on emergency response, conservation and documentation of monuments, heritage architecture, museum collections, and the preservation of archives. Museum staff were trained on how to use equipment to document their collections

and how to produce high quality publications with minimal resources using these images. Participants also discussed emergency collection care, education, and staff training. Thousands of objects are now more thoroughly documented, with high quality images and attached metadata, thanks to the dedication of workshop participants.

During the workshop, a keynote lecture was delivered by Michel Al-Maqdissi, Researcher at the Department of Oriental Antiquities at the Louvre Museum.

The multi-year initiative, supported by a grant from the President’s Global Innovation Fund, is spearheaded by Zainab Bahrani, Edith Porada Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Art and Archaeology at Columbia University.

A Century of Palestinian Nationalism: Modes of Political Organization and Representation since 1919

December 14-15, 2019

This conference investigated the historical causes for the formation of the First Palestinian Congress, the Muslim-Christian Associations, and the course of the Palestinian National Movement. It also retraced the political and social profiles of those who established these different organizations. In roundtable sessions, participants discussed conflicting ideologies that these political formations championed, the factionalism they produced, the social classes they were rooted in, and their consequences for today’s Palestinian political landscape.

A keynote lecture was delivered by Rashid Khalidi, Edward Said Professor of Modern Arab Studies at Columbia University.

Initiated by Dr. Noha Tadros, a former visiting fellow at the Amman Global Center, the conference was organized in partnership with the French Institute for the Near East (Ifpo), the Institute for Palestine Studies, and Al Hekma Association.







Untangling Popular Power: Rhetoric, Faith, and Social Order in the Middle East

March 2-3, 2019

In collaboration with the Institute for Religion, Culture and Public Life at Columbia University, the Amman Center held a conference that explored various forms of popular power in the Middle East and North Africa by examining how populism is defined, the role of modern populist movements, how the use of religious identity has shaped these movements, and the relationship between populist ambitions and various media platforms, from print to broadcast to digital.

The two-day conference provided a forum for scholars, local experts, advanced doctoral students, activists, and practitioners to investigate these themes and track how populism that uses religious discourse is being variously deployed across the MENA region.

The keynote lecture was delivered by Jon Alterman, Senior Vice President, Zbigniew Brzezinski Chair in Global Security and Geostrategy, and Director of the Middle East Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Development of Novel Methods and Technologies for the Diagnosis, Monitoring and Treatment of Diabetic Foot Syndrome

December 5, 2018

This symposium focused on the unmet clinical needs of diabetic patients with peripheral artery disease in the Middle East, and explored the most prevalent medical conditions of these patients, what considerations apply specifically to refugee populations, and what affects the viability of new technologies and methods to address these specific needs.

The discussion was jointly led by Andreas Hielscher, Professor of Biomedical and Electrical Engineering and Radiology at Columbia University, and Rabah Al Abdi, Assistant Professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering at Jordan University of Science and Technology. The event was organized in conjunction with Jordan University of Science and Technology and King Abdullah University Hospital.

The symposium focused on unmet medical needs for low and middle income countries, and showcased novel methods and technologies to identify the underlying mechanism and resulting pathologies, such as foot ulcers and infections.

Contemporary Amman and the Right to the City

November 3-5, 2018

Despite the growing power of nationalist politics and of neoliberal agendas in shaping the urban trajectory of the city of Amman, the simultaneous rise of its residents associations, youth initiatives, and codified everyday practices of resistance have allowed inhabitants to reshape their physical and conceptual interactions within the city, and to practice alternatives imaginaries for shared livelihoods. At an important historical juncture, and fifty years since the publishing of Henri Lefebvre's seminal text in 1968, this conference sought to reposition the notion of the right to the city in relation to the particularities of Amman within the context of a global movement toward localized urban projects of direct democracy.

Three interrelated themes were presented through which the right to the city can be understood, articulated, or negotiated. These included urban policies and governance, social fabric and urban practices, and housing, access, and speculative growth. A book project that draws on and extends the conversation was published following the conference.

The conference was organized in partnership with Studio-X Amman and the French Institute for the Near East (Ifpo).

STUDIO-X AMMAN

Studio-X Amman is a regional platform for public discussion, experimental design, and research in architecture, focusing on issues like access, migration, representation, memory, and citizenship in the Arab region. The program is jointly run by Columbia University’s Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation (GSAPP) and Columbia Global Centers | Amman.

Studio-X Amman brings together Columbia faculty and students with practitioners, researchers, and students from the Arab world to critically reflect on the role of architecture education and practice in times of mass displacement, dispossession, and destruction, and in the construction of alternative collective imaginaries for our cities.

Programming highlights:

Janet Abu-Lughod Library Seminar May 27 - June 29, 2020

Studio-X Amman expanded initiatives and programs around the Janet Abu-Lughod Library, generously donated by Lila Abu-Lughod, Joseph L. Battenwieser Professor of Social Science at Columbia University, and her family. The fourth Janet Abu-Lughod Library Seminar was held in partnership with the Sijal Institute for Language and Culture. Participants reflected on the temporality, vulnerability, and exploitation of lives on a construction site. Questioning the frameworks and sources of “third world architecture” history, the seminar experimented with and produced the contents of *Superheat*, the first issue of an annual publication. While the intensifying heat warms up construction sites and their materials, the stories of the lives on these sites survive as they happen within a bearable substructure.

Emergency Urbanism: Infrastructure and Cities

December 2020 - January 2021

[This online series of webinars](#) run by Columbia Global Centers | Amman and Studio-X Amman examined the ways in which the pandemic has further exposed and aggravated nations’ urban challenges including inequality, urban density, lack of adequate physical and social infrastructure, access to affordable housing, as well as environmental health risk. Conversations brought together experts to discuss what is required to avert the indirect socio-cultural impact that may result when urban life is interrupted; what city recovery strategies centred on inclusive and sustainable models are needed to address such challenges; and what are the lessons learnt from previous work on urban resilience in terms of digitalization, mobility, density, urban design, collaborative governance, and action-oriented guidance to build back better cities.

The series was organized in partnership with Columbia’s Global Centers in Istanbul and Tunis.



SPEAKER SERIES

Prior to the pandemic, the Amman Center hosted regular public talks for members of our local community to engage with scholars and learn more about a wide range of topics, from current affairs and environmental issues to history and the arts. [Video](#) and [audio recordings](#) of past talks are available on our [website](#).

The following is a listing of the public lectures the Center held between late 2018 to early 2020:

Seth Anziska, Mohamed S. Farsi-Polonsky Lecturer, Jewish-Muslim Relations at University College London – *Preventing Palestine: A Political History from Camp David to Oslo* on November 6, 2018.

Suad Amiry, Founder of Riwaq, conservation architect, and author – *Peasant Architecture in Palestine: Space, Kinship, and Gender* on November 22, 2018.

Amira Hass, journalist and activist – *Are the Inherent Contradictions of an Israeli Anti-Colonialist Reconcilable* on November 26, 2018.

Salim Tamari, Research Associate, Institute for Palestine Studies Editor, *Jerusalem Quarterly* – *Narratives of the Great War and the Remaking of the New Middle East (1914-1918)* on December 16, 2018.

Aida Touma-Sliman, politician and activist – *The Nation State Law: Implications for the Rights of Non-Jewish Minorities* on January 20, 2019.

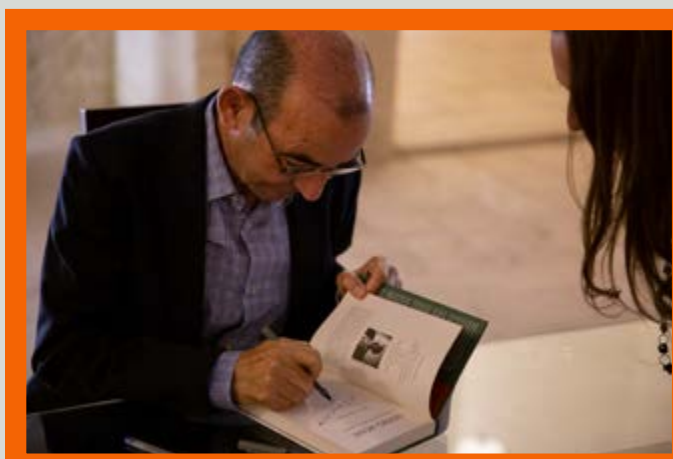
Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman and Founder – *The Brave Knowledge World* on February 5, 2019.

Jon Alterman, Senior Vice President, Zbigniew Brzezinski Chair in Global Security and Geostrategy, and Director, Middle East Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies – *Populism and the Democratization of Injustice* on March 2, 2019.

Hisham Matar, Pulitzer Prize winner and author of *The Return* and *In the Country of Men* – *A Reading and Conversation* on March 18, 2019.

Fawwaz Traboulsi, Associate Professor of Political Science and History, American University of Beirut – *Sykes-Picot and Balfour Revisited: Looking Beyond the Maps* on April 11, 2019.





Bashir Bashir, Palestinian political theorist – *The Holocaust and the Nakba: A New Grammar of Trauma and History* on April 21, 2019.

Raja Shehadeh, writer, lawyer, and Founder of Al-Haq, and **Penny Johnson**, Associate Editor, *Jerusalem Quarterly* – *Writing/Walking Palestine: Raja Shehadeh charts his city, Ramallah, and Penny Johnson explores our common lives and histories with animals* on October 9, 2019.

Suzanne Goldberg, Executive Vice President for University Life and Herbert and Doris Wechsler Clinical Professor of Law, Columbia University – *#MeToo and Global Change: Best Practices for Addressing Sexual Harassment and Misconduct* on November 18, 2019.

Tareq Baconi, author of *Hamas Contained: The Rise and Pacification of Palestinian Resistance*; Analyst, Israel/Palestine and Economics of Conflict at International Crisis Group – *Hamas Contained* on November 20, 2019.

Rashid Khalidi, Edward Said Professor of Modern Arab Studies, Columbia University – *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine* on December 14, 2019.

Omar Shakir, Israel and Palestine Director, Human Rights Watch – *Human Rights in Conflict* on January 8, 2020.

Michel Al-Maqdissi, researcher at the Department of Oriental Antiquities, Louvre Museum – *Archaeological Archives of the French Mandate Period and the Creation of the "Service des Antiquités" and Museums in Syria* on January 17, 2020.

Mark Farha, author of *Lebanon: Rise and Fall of the Secular State Under Siege – Religion, State, and Society in Lebanon: Consociational Curse or Blessing?* on February 10, 2020.

Robert Klitzman, Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia University Medical Center – *What is Bioethics, and Why is it Important Today?* on February 19, 2020.

Andrea Cassatella, Visiting Research Fellow, Columbia Global Centers | Amman – *Is Democracy Secular?* on February 26, 2020.

Isabella Hammad, author of *The Parisian – A Reading and Conversation* on March 10, 2020.

Roger Cohen, Op-ed Columnist, *The New York Times* – *Adieu Middle East: The Consequences of American Abdication* on March 14, 2020.

GOVERNANCE AND TEAM

Faculty Advisory Committee

Lisa Anderson

James T. Shotwell Professor Emerita of International Relations; Dean Emerita of the School of International and Public Affairs; and Special Lecturer in International and Public Affairs

Carol Becker

Dean of The School of the Arts and Professor of the Arts

Melissa Begg

Dean of the Columbia School of Social Work and Professor of Social Work and Biostatistics

Jason Bordoff

Professor of Professional Practice and Director of the Center on Global Energy Policy, School of International and Public Affairs

Brian Boyd

Lecturer and Director of Museum of Anthropology; Program Director of the Columbia Center for Archeology; and Co-Director of the Center for Palestine Studies

Daniel Corstange

Assistant Professor of Political Science and of International and Public Affairs

Thea Abu El-Haj

Professor in Education and Education Program Director/Chair, Barnard College

Gil Hochberg

Ransford Professor of Hebrew, Comparative Literature, and Middle Eastern Studies and Chair of the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies

Matthew Keegan

Moinian Assistant Professor of Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures, Barnard College

Sarah Knuckey

Faculty Co-Director of the Human Rights Institute; Lieff Cabraser Associate Clinical Professor of Law; and Director of the Human Rights Clinic



Our Faculty Advisory Committee provides academic and intellectual input, leadership, and advice regarding the Amman Center’s activities and plans, supports its engagement with faculty, as well as helps to identify, expand, and advance scholarly exchange, and create innovative and sustainable programming, at and through, the Global Center.

Committee members represent a wide spectrum of Columbia faculty interests and disciplinary areas, and are selected because of their commitment to globalization and to the study of the Middle East, as well as their familiarity with, and interest in, the region’s nations, cultures, and issues.



- Laura Kurgan**
Professor of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation; Director of Visual Studies Sequence; and Director, MS in Design, Computation, and Built Environments Program
- Lila Abu-Lughod**
Joseph L. Battenwieser Professor of Social Science
- Brinkley Messick** (Committee Chair)
Professor of Anthropology and of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies and Director of the Middle East Institute
- Daniel Naujoks**
Interim Director of International Organization and UN Studies Specialization and Lecturer of International and Public Affairs
- Wafaa El-Sadr**
Director of Columbia World Projects; University Professor; Dr. Mathilde Krim-amfAR Professor of Global Health (in Epidemiology); and Director of ICAP
- Marwa Elshakry**
Associate Professor of History
- Bruce Shapiro**
Adjunct Faculty and Senior Executive Director of the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma, Columbia Journalism School
- Kathryn Yatrakis**
Faculty Advisor for Manhattanville and Adjunct Associate Professor of History
- Monette Zard**
Allan Rosenfield Associate Professor of Forced Migration and Health and Director of the Program on Forced Migration and Health





Our Advisory Board provides leadership and counsel regarding the Center’s activities and is composed of prominent academics, public figures, and business leaders from Jordan and the region.

Advisory Board

Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah has been a tireless advocate of educational advancement in Jordan and helped create the vision for establishing the Center.

Loulwa Bakr BUS ‘4, Senior Partner, Chrome Advisory

Jean Magnano Bollinger TC ‘72, P: LAW ‘02, IA ‘11, visual artist and Co-Founder and Assistant Director, Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum

His Excellency Amr Dabbagh P: CC ‘19, Chairman and CEO of Al-Dabbagh Group and Founding Chairman and Chair of the Board of Trustees of STARS Foundation

Hanzade Doğan BUS ‘99, Founder and Chairwoman, Doğan Online and Hepsiburada Group

Professor Meyer Feldberg BUS ‘65, P: BUS ‘92, Senior Advisor at Morgan Stanley and Professor and Dean Emeritus, Columbia Business School

Ann Kaplan, Trustee Emerita of Columbia University and Partner at Circle Wealth Management

His Excellency Zaid Al-Rifai, former Prime Minister of Jordan and former President of the Senate of Jordan

Isam Salfiti P: BUS ‘00, CC ‘03, Chairman of Bank al Etihad and Jordan Hotels and Tourism Company

Mughith Sukhtian BUS ‘01, Managing Director of GMS Holdings

Asem Toukan P: CC ‘17, CEO and Partner at Support Services Company



IN MEMORIAM

We would like to acknowledge the incredibly sad loss in 2020 of our board member, Elaine Wolfensohn and her husband Jim, former President of the World Bank.

Elaine was a member of our Advisory Board since the Amman Center’s founding, and was instrumental in helping us shape our education programs.

Advisory Board Summit

An Advisory Board Summit, chaired by President Lee C. Bollinger, was held virtually on March 10, 2021. The Summit convened board members from all nine Columbia Global Centers around the world, in addition to a number of Trustees, faculty, members of the University administration, and special guests. Among the board members in attendance were Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah, Mr. Ratan Tata, H.E. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Jorge Paulo Lemann, and other luminaries.

President Bollinger made remarks on the state of the University, and shared updates on the new Climate School, Columbia World Projects, and other important initiatives. A presentation then followed by Safwan Masri, EVP for Global Centers and Global Development, on “Columbia in the World: Redefining Global Engagement” that illustrated how the Columbia Global Centers pivoted during the pandemic and have emerged a stronger, more vital, and innovative platform for global engagement.

The meeting also included a special presentation by two of Columbia’s leading experts in epidemiology and virology, who provided a global update on the pandemic including vaccine development, scale-up, and efficacy, and SARS-CoV-2 variants and emerging strains.

Our Team

Columbia Global Centers | Amman

Safwan M. Masri

EVP for Global Centers and Global Development and Director of Columbia Global Centers | Amman

Hanya Salah

Deputy Director

Zakhariya Awwad

Finance Manager

Farrah Bdour

Senior Communications and Outreach Manager and Special Assistant to the EVP

Dana Bibi

Program Officer

Duna Dabbas

Senior Communications and Outreach Officer

Jawad Dukhgan

Associate Director, Studio-X Amman *(through June 2021)*

Nour Laswi

Program Officer
Mellon Fellowship Program

Michael Grouskay

Research Assistant
(through July 2021)

Talal Junblatt

Senior Operations and Projects Officer

Saddam Al-Khamaiseh

Senior IT Officer

Helen Malko

Program Manager
Mellon Fellowship Program
(through February 2021)

Ahmad Al-Mousa

Senior Program Manager

Dana Sakkijha

Administration Assistant

Rita Salameh

Executive Manager

Lina Sharaan

Senior Human Resources and Finance Officer

Diala Sweiss

Procurement Officer



CREDITS

Photo credits

The Orenda Tribe, “Unity in Diversity”: front cover

Sandy Kaufman: pg. 1

Eileen Barroso / Columbia University: pg. 2

Sculpture by Daniel Chester French: pg. 3, 4

Seth Cluett: pg. 6

Mohammad Hawari: pg. 18, 26, 27, 32

Van Amringe Memorial: pg. 35

Luminance Creative: pg. 48, 49

Edits

Farrah Bdour
Duna Dabbas

Design

Cathy Hanna
catdesign1.com





5 Moh'd Al Sa'd Al-Batayneh St.
King Hussein Park
P. O. Box 144706
Amman 11814 Jordan
amman.cgc@columbia.edu
Tel +962 6 5777955
globalcenters.columbia.edu/amman