Conference was held under the patronage of HE the Minister of Education, Dr Majid bin Ali Al-Nuaimi and in association with London South Bank University with sponsorships from the Chartered Institute of Building (partial sponsoring of the conference proceedings and best paper on innovation), Nass Group (sponsoring the Gala Dinner), the Higher Education Academy in the UK (sponsoring 2 best papers on sustainable futures), LSBU (partial sponsoring of the proceedings and best paper on research methodology) and many other sponsors.

On the first day, the Conference started with opening remarks from the President of the University and Conference Chair who provided the context for the conference and the rationale for organizing it and provided some research results about the status of competitiveness of Bahrain in relation to other Arab nations and trends over the last 5 years.

A welcome speech was then delivered by Dr Abdul Ghani Al Shuwaikh, Secretary General of the Higher Education Council, on behalf of HE the Minister of Education who spoke at length about the importance of the topic in light of the National Research Strategy developed by the HEC.

Prof Waheeb Alkhaja, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of ASU and Honorary Chair of the Conference, then delivered a speech about the importance of sustainability from Universities’ perspective and how our University is keen to embrace a sustainable approach.

In his speech, Prof Waheeb said “As Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Applied Science University it gives me a great pleasure to welcome our distinguished guests and scholars and researchers and practitioners who have come all the way to Bahrain from as far as Australia, United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, Nigeria, and Turkey and many other countries”.

Prof Waheeb added that “this topical conference organized by Applied Science University in association with London South Bank University and with great support from the Chartered
Institute of Building, the Association of Arab Universities and the Higher Education Academy in the UK covers important topics related to our globe and its future sustainability. It is pleasing to see the Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Building, Mr Chris Blythe, amongst our distinguished guests. This conference will undoubtedly contribute to HM the king’s vision 2030 to make the Kingdom of Bahrain a truly international knowledge hub. The wise leadership of our Kingdom is enabling us to generate knowledge and conduct research that is relevant to our society and communities”. He then thanked HE, the Minister of Education in Bahrain, Dr Majed bin Ali Alnuaimi for his continuous support and for the patronage of this conference and added that our Ministry, the Higher Education Council, and the Bahrain Quality Assurance Authority are doing a great job in transforming Education and Higher Education in the Kingdom, and we are all committed to their vision and state of the art guiding strategies.

Prof Waheeb added, “ASU has signed a strategic partnership with LSBU and we launched the College of Engineering last September and we are jointly organizing this conference and soon we will be announcing a joint venture to support research, innovation and enterprise. It is pleasing to see Prof David Phoenix, Vice Chancellor and President of LSBU and many colleagues from LSBU attending this conference. We have also signed a memorandum of collaboration with Cardiff Met and we launched 2 programs in Management and Business Studies and Accounting and Finance last September”.

He concluded by stating, “Building a sustainable future is an important priority for many universities in the Kingdom of Bahrain and beyond. The future leaders of tomorrow need to preach what they learnt about sustainability and undoubtedly Universities can play a major role in producing these future leaders. It is important to address the issue of sustainability by covering the three pillars of Environment, Technology and Economics. Applied Science University (ASU) in Bahrain and since its establishment has operated to be environmentally friendly within the sustainable buildings and campuses context, particularly in terms of the efficient use of energy and resources, especially the use of wastewater” and concluded by once again thanking HE, Dr Majed bin Ali Alnuaimi for his patronage and by wishing
participants a successful conference and a pleasant stay in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Following Prof Waheeb’s talk speeches were made by HE Mr Simon Martin, the British Ambassador to Bahrain, about the importance of joint collaboration between Bahraini and British Universities, Prof David Phoenix, Vice Chancellor of LSBU who spoke about the value of linking research and innovation, and finally Mr Chris Blythe, Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Building about the role of professional bodies in supporting sustainable futures. The opening ceremony, which was attended by around 200 people, concluded with awarding the speakers and a group photograph. It was pleasing to see Mr Sameer Nass, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Honorary Chair of the Conference, attending the opening ceremony.

Following the opening ceremony, keynote speeches were made by Dr Farzana Al Maraghi from the Higher Education Council in Bahrain about the status of research in Bahrain and internationally and gave a detailed description of the Bahrain’s National Research Strategy, and Prof Charles Egbu, Dean of the School of Built Environment and Architecture and Co-Chair of the Conference who spoke about the link between innovation and sustainability. Then, three parallel sessions started with 24 presentations on various topics such as construction, sustainable futures, finance, economy, education amongst many others. The first day of the conference was concluded with a panel discussed chaired by Mr Chris Blythe, Chief Executive of the CIOB, with members from different backgrounds sharing their views on the latest trends in sustainable futures relevant to their respective fields. The panelists were Ms Paula Boast, Mr Christopher Core, Ms Emilia Mateva and Dr Jassim Haji. The guest speaker at the Gala Dinner was Prof Riyadh Hamzah who delivered an interesting speech about the future of sustainability.

The second day of the Conference started with keynote speeches by Dr Roy Blatchford from the Office of the First Deputy Prime Minister about the importance of education in creating sustainable futures, and Prof Mustafa Alshawi from Unisearch UK who spoke about Building Information Modelling. Then, another 3 parallel sessions started with 36 presentations
presented throughout the day on topics related to culture, HR, Advanced IT in support of sustainability amongst many others.

The Conference concluded with a successful closing ceremony where speakers, members of the organizing committee and volunteering students were awarded certificates of appreciation. Speakers presented a total of 60 papers from 20 countries from all over the globe. A total of 65 papers were published in the 730 pages Conference proceedings, which was printed in a hard cover with an ISBN number.

The academic outputs from colleagues of the University who made contributions to the conference are listed below:


I strongly believe that we have run a truly international peer refereed research conference of the highest quality. The feedback we received from participants was overwhelming and very supportive. This wouldn’t have happened without a true team effort. I would like to start by thanking Prof Waheeb for his great support and as a token of appreciation the Conference Proceedings was dedicated to him for his vision and tireless efforts in transforming the University and making it truly international.

I would also like to thank Dr Assem for chairing the scientific committee and dealing with all research and academic matters (and a big thank you to our colleagues from the University who were part of the scientific committee and helped with the paper reviewing process) and Dr Faiza for chairing the organizing committee and dealing with all logistical and organizational issues through a detailed project plan and for doing a lot of the running
during the 2 days of the conference.

Many thanks are also due to Dr Mohamed Yousif for his continuous support and extra help provided. This conference wouldn’t have happened without the great efforts from too many colleagues including Ms Tania, the Conference Coordinator, who helped immensely with the website and publicity materials and VIPs invitations and for the coverage in the English press, Mr Abdulla for dealing with many administrative issues especially the difficult issue of securing visas for all participants and handling all financial issues, Ms Ruqaya for being the best MC any organization can dream to have and for her interactions with the media and press and for arranging the conference gifts and dealing with participants’ accommodation and flights and for organizing the social day, Ms Mariam for dealing with the proceedings of the conference and acting as a single contact during the 2 days conference and by being a true professional throughout the conference, Ms Diana who worked so hard communicating with participants, chasing paper reviews, and producing a draft copy of the conference program and keeping all participants and authors informed about the status of the conference, and Mr Moath who worked really hard on keeping the website up-to-date and some of the technical issues. The aforementioned colleagues were part of the organizing committee and made exceptional efforts to make the conference a great success and they were present throughout the conference, day and night.

Other colleagues who have helped included Mr Rifat, Ms Shadia (especially with the competitiveness trends presentation delivered by the President), Mr Shakir, Mr Fernando, and Mr Francisco from ICT who provide exceptional help, Mr Mohamed Nassar (who represented Mr Abdulla in some meetings), Mr Ashraf, Mr Arafat, Mr Majed, Mr Maan, Mr Yasser, Mr Mohamed, Mr Ibrahim, Mr Goodwin, Mr Ahmad, Mr Absar, Mr Abdulla, Mr Hassan (our security and drivers) from admin and finance, Ms Catherine Hogan for checking some of our English material, Mr Bahaa and Mr Hameed from Marketing and Public Affairs, Ms Ayat for sending the invitations for the opening ceremony, Dr Mohammed AlHamami, Mr Mohamed Najjar and Students Council and anybody else who contributed to
the conference.

Special thanks must also go to the chair of sessions at the conference: Dr Assem, Dr Faiza, Prof Mahmoud, Prof Saad, Prof Hilal, Dr Ramzi, Dr Ashraf, Dr Islam, Dr Khairi, Dr Marwan, Dr Adel, and Dr Farzana.

Most importantly, I would like to thank our volunteering students who were our best ambassadors at the conference. The exhibition for Art and Science students organized by Dr Belal and Dr Oday with great help from Dr Faiza and Mr Abdulla was well received by participants. I would like to conclude by thanking our colleague speakers (and others who attended to learn) and congratulating them for presenting some real research generated by the University and to say well done to Dr Islam for winning the best paper on innovation awarded by the CIOB, the Chartered Institute of Building.

Organizing an international conference of the highest quality is not as easy task. However, proper planning and commitment and determination can make a big conference. I am confident that the conference will have a positive impact on students’ recruitment and the raising of the University’s profile and reputation in the region and internationally.