His Excellency Faisal Al Bannai Appointed as Secretary General of Abu Dhabi’s New Advanced Technology Research Council



EDGE MD and CEO to strengthen Abu Dhabi’s position as centre of excellence in R&D

ABU DHABI-UAE: 27 May, 2020 (WAM) – The UAE President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, in his capacity as the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, has issued Law No.14 for 2020, to establish the Advanced Technology Research Council (ATRC).

ATRC has been founded as an independent legal entity affiliated to the Abu Dhabi Executive Council, with the full legal capacity to practice its activities. A board appointed by the Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council is tasked with overseeing ATRC’s operations.

ATRC is mandated to expand the breadth and depth of an already thriving R&D ecosystem, and to strengthen Abu Dhabi’s position as a world-leading, dynamic hub for research and development. Bringing together cross-disciplinary leaders in research and technology, the new Council is to cultivate a collaborative research community, accelerate innovation and discovery and foster a culture of inquiry.

In replacing the Abu Dhabi Research and Development Authority, ATRC is to oversee all R&D activity in the emirate. ATRC is responsible for proposing general policies, strategic plans and initiatives related to research and development in the field of advanced technology as well as for setting R&D priorities in the emirate in a manner consistent with the government’s directives and aspirations.

Furthermore, ATRC is responsible for outlining the controls and standards necessary to sanction, support, finance and undertake R&D contracts and for referring these to the Executive Council for approval.

The scope of advanced technology R&D is defined to include R&D activities in all fields and specialties, such as engineering, communications, artificial intelligence, AI, robotics, space, alternative energy, and renewables. In addition, the environmental, chemical, petrochemical, food, pharmaceutical and construction industries, as well as other industries and disciplines that seek to solve practical problems while achieving commercial purposes and involve inventions, products, services or technologies, are also covered within the scope. Non-commercial academic R&D activities are also part of ATRC's wider remit.

The new Council is tasked with preparing plans and programmes, including financing initiatives, that aim to expand R&D capabilities in advanced technology according to approved controls. Furthermore, it is to manage and implement R&D programmes, as well as launch, adopt and supervise government-funded R&D initiatives.

The decree also stipulates that ATRC is responsible for reviewing and disbursing R&D grant requests from academic intuitions and individuals in accordance with approved controls and standards. The Council may establish or invest in companies including laboratories and incubators that attract or accept investments for R&D purposes, and also invest in advanced technologies.

ATRC is further responsible for establishing and developing R&D partnerships with local and international financing institutions, exchanging expertise to secure financing and develop R&D in advanced technologies, and entering into contracts and memorandum of understanding agreements with local and international scientific and research institutions. In addition, the Council is authorised to implement strategies related to investment and commercial activities and intellectual property that is the outcome of research it has undertaken or contributed to.