IBK Ibn Khaldun Fellowship for Saudi Arabian Women

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

KACST مدينة الملك عبدالعزيز للعلوم والتقنية

Ibn Khaldun Fellowship for Saudi Arabian Women (IBK)

October 27, 2025

Presenters:
Dr. Maryam Alsharqi, IBK Fellow
Dr. Kamal Youcef-Toumi, IBK Director
Ms. Dorothy Hanna, IBK Assistant Director
Mrs. Samantha Menke-Whitney, IBK Admin Assistant

Outline

1. Fellowship Overview
2. Application Information
3. Q&A

Dr. Lamyaa Almehmadi, 2023
Spectroscopy

Dr. Maryam Alsharqi, 2023
Cardiology Imaging

Dr. Sharifa Alghowinem, 2019
AI & Personal Robots

Dr. Hadeel Alnegheimish, 2024
Machine Learning

Fellowship Overview

IBK Fellowship – Overview

The Ibn Khaldun (IBK) Fellowship is a one or two year research opportunity for Saudi Arabian women who hold a PhD with competitive and merit-based admission. ***Hands-on research is the central goal of the program.***

- Collaborate with an MIT professor and research group
- Access world-class facilities and support
- Professional development opportunities to supplement research

Dr. Wedyan Babatain, 2022
& MIT PhD candidate Ozgun Kilic
Soft Electronics for Healthcare & the Environment

IBK Fellowship – Fellows

Who are the IBK fellows?

1. 5 fellows accepted per year
2. Selected from top global PhD programs
3. Represent 18+ Saudi institutions
4. Competitive: 8.4% acceptance rate in 2024
5. Research in KSA's Research Development and Innovation (RDI) Priority areas:
   a) Health and Wellness
   b) Sustainable Environment
   c) Energy and Industrial Leadership
   d) Economies of the Future

Dr. Maryam Alsufyani, 2024
PFAS Detection, Chemistry

Dr. Eman Ageely, 2021
Genetics, Koch Institute

IBK Fellowship - History

The Ibn Khaldun Fellowship was established through a collaboration between MIT and King Fahd University for Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM).

10th Anniversary Celebration at KACST in 2022

Milestones

2012 – First fellow arrived at MIT via a collaboration with KFUPM

2013 – Saudi Aramco expanded the program

2018 – KACST & MIT signed a 10-year agreement

IBK Fellowship – MIT Host Departments

IBK fellows can work in any MIT research area. Fellows have worked in 20+ MIT depts:

1. Aeronautics & Astronautics
2. Architecture & Planning
3. Biology
4. Civil & Environmental Engineering
5. Computer Science & AI Lab (CSAIL)
6. Institute for Medical Engineering & Science (IMES)
7. Jameel Clinic
8. Koch Cancer Research Institute
9. Lab for Information & Decision Systems (LIDS)
10. Materials Science and Engineering
11. Mathematics
12. Nuclear Science & Engineering
13. Picower Institute for Memory & Learning
14. Ragon Institute
15. Research Lab of Electronics (RLE)
16. Sloan School of Management
17. Sociotechnical Systems Research Center
18. Whitehead Institute

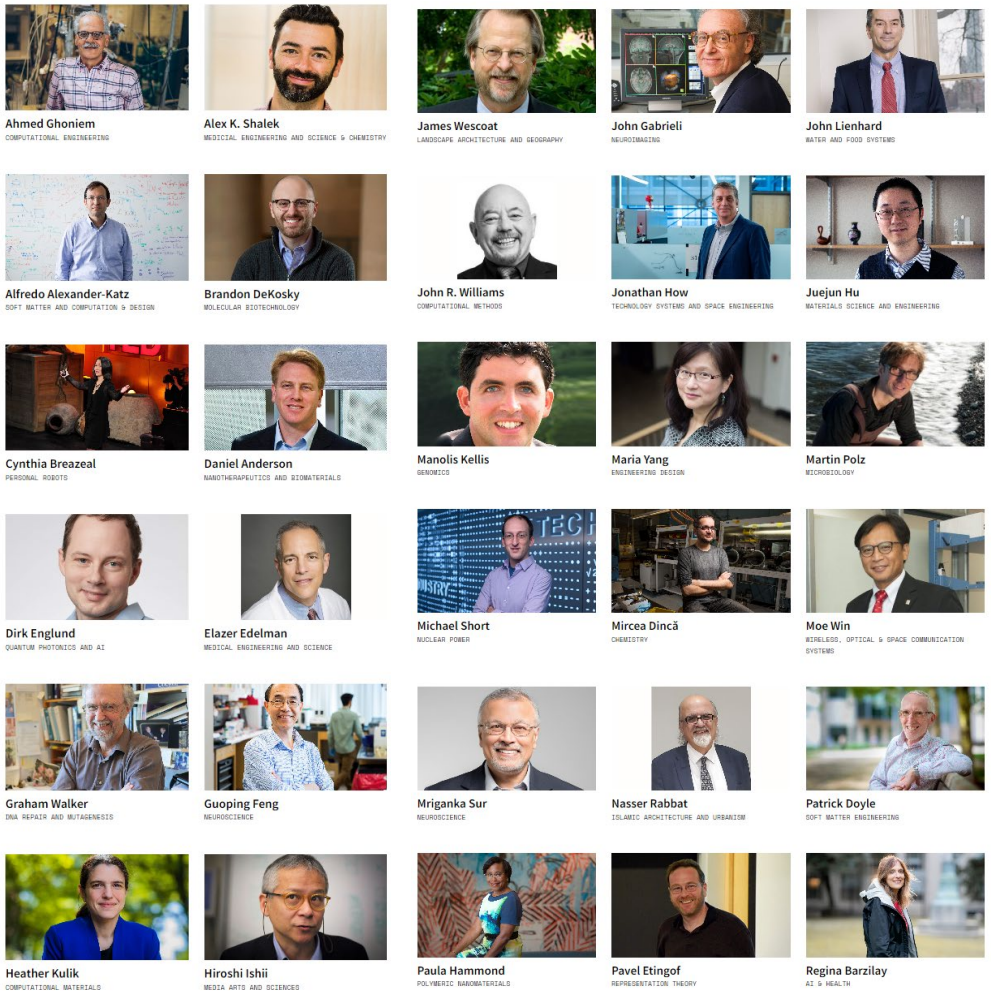
Kaufman Teaching Certificate ceremony, 2017
Fellows represent five MIT departments, listed in order of fellow pictured:

19. Media Lab, Dr. Shada Al Salamah
20. Mechanical Engineering, Dr. Thamraa AlShahrani
21. Chemistry, Dr. Haleema AlAmri
22. McGovern Institute for Brain Research, Dr. Sufana AlMashhadi
23. Chemical Engineering, Dr. Amal AlDossary,

IBK Fellowship - Faculty Matching

IBK fellows have worked with more than 50 different MIT faculty.

- New fellows work with any MIT faculty – not limited to previous faculty.
- We help you connect with MIT faculty who are a good match for your research interests.
- The IBK team sets up interviews between new fellows and faculty to finding a strong fit.



IBK Fellowship – Impact To Date

Postdoctoral Fellows: 60
MIT Departments: 23
MIT Faculty: 55
Publications: 155
Patents filed: 10
Tech Startups: 3

Former Fellows in Leadership roles:

- Senior Leaders in KSA Government & Academia: 60%
- Leaders investing in the KSA from abroad: 4%

The first IBK fellow Dr. Malak Al Nory mentors students in 2012. Today, Dr. Malak is an Advisor for the Saudi Ministry of Energy.

Dr. Walaa Khushaim pitches her femtech startup, Gees Health, based on tech she developed, at MIT's delta v Demo Day, in September, 2025.

IBK Fellowship – Selection Process

Independent review by separate committees of MIT & KACST Faculty.

1. Top candidates have:
   a) strong research match with MIT faculty
   b) clear plan for impact
   c) excellent communication skills
2. IBK selects top candidates even if there is more than one in the same field.
3. Fellowship is open to any field represented at MIT & in KSA's RDI priority areas.

Dr. Dalal Alezi, 2022
MOFs for Energy Storage & Gas Separation
Chemistry

IBK Fellowship Benefits

1. **IBK Financial award:** stipend, health insurance, professional development fund
2. **Research:** hands-on experience & MIT network
3. **Professional development:** 30% of fellowship
4. **IBK Fellowship network & community:** before, during & after fellowship
5. **For kids:** Cambridge has free, excellent schools & MIT childcare costs supplement

IBK Tubing Adventure New Hampshire 2023

Eid Al Adha Dinner in Boston's North End, 2024

Application Information

IBK Application Criteria

Apply – Do you fit the criteria?

1. Be a woman who is a Saudi Arabian citizen
2. Excellent command of spoken & written English
3. Demonstrated ability to conduct research
4. 2+ publications in peer reviewed journals
5. Match with MIT faculty current research
6. Ph.D. within 6 years before program start date:
   September 1, 2020 – August 31, 2026

Dr. Hend Alrasheed, 2023
Information Technology
Media Lab

IBK Application – Demonstrate Impact

What makes a strong application?

1. Demonstrate the impact you have already made:
   a) Impact of current or recent research
   b) Describe your area of expertise
   c) Two recent recommendations describing your research outcomes and ability

Dr. Rawan Alsubaie, 2023, & lab teammates
Neuroscience
Picower Institute for Memory and Learning

IBK Application – Plan for Impact

What makes a strong application?

2. Organized plan for research you would like to do at MIT and work beyond MIT.
   b) What impact are you hoping to make?
   c) Which MIT faculty have the best research match with these goals?

Note: *You do not need to contact MIT faculty before you are accepted.*

Dr. Alaa Algargoosh, 2022, & lab teammates
Architecture – Acoustics
Media Lab

IBK Application Deadlines & Requirements

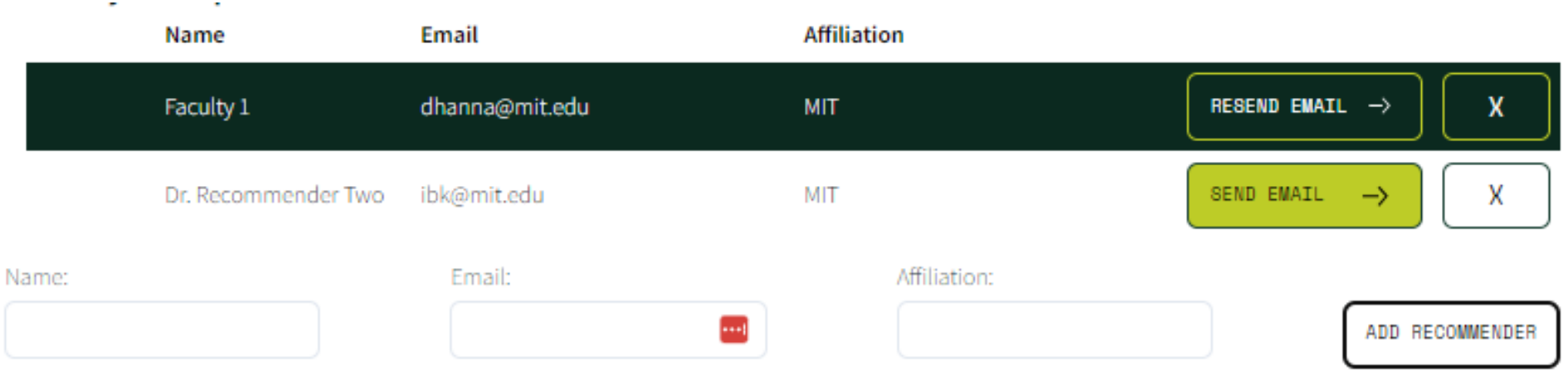
Deadlines:

- Application: **Nov 24th, 9am EST**
- 2 Rec Letters: **Dec 1st, 9am EST**

Required:

- Application form: ibk.mit.edu/application
- Current CV (pdf)
- Most significant publication (pdf)
- 2 Recommendation Letters
  (use form to request after application submitted)

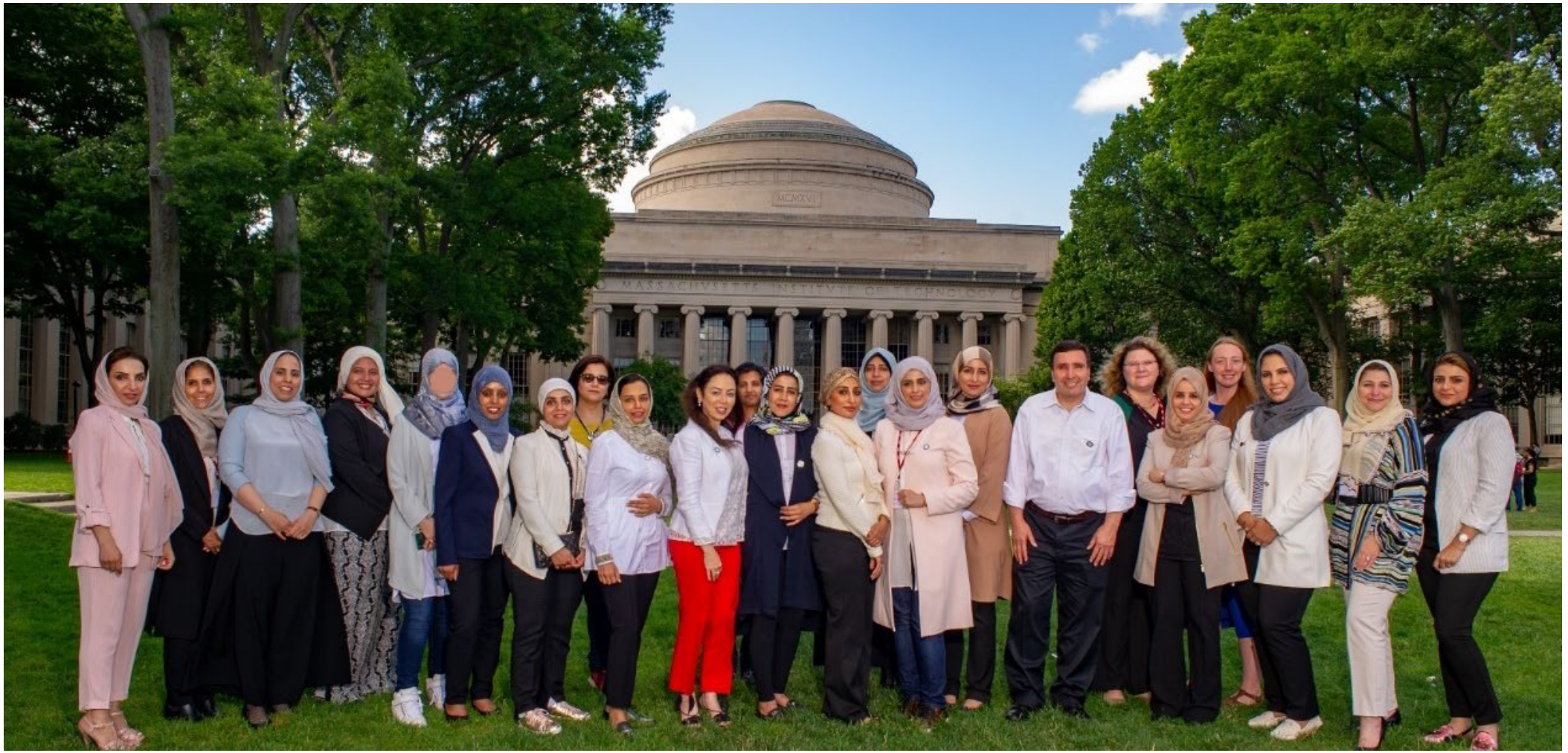
Recommendation Letters Form



IBK Application Timeline

Oct – Nov	Application Open
December	MIT & KACST review applications
January	Top candidates invited for video interviews
February	Acceptance/Denial letters
Mar – Apr	Accepted fellows meet with faculty & confirm lab match
May – July	US Visa & MIT appointment process
August	Move to Massachusetts
September	Fellowship begins

Dr. Walaa Khushaim, 2023, & colleague
Biosensors
Chemical Engineering

Thank you

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