

Beyond the start-up: Navigating scalability for Bahraini women entrepreneurs

Date: Wednesday, February 7th, 2024

Time: 10:00 am ET / 6:00 pm Bahrain time

Format: Hybrid

Panelists



Nawaf Mohamed Alkoheji

CEO, Tenmou

Nawaf Mohamed Alkoheji is currently the Chief Executive Officer at Tenmou. He is committed, driven, and dedicated to developing a start-up culture in Bahrain and to work together with key stakeholders to benefit entrepreneurs and encourage companies to grow and scale up.

Nawaf started his entrepreneurial journey by launching Foods Limited, now called the Culinary Company, a specialized catering company in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Nawaf also has several years of startup and SME experience, while he was working in Tamkeen. Nawaf graduated with a BA in International Relations from Webster University London, and an MBA from the University of Incarnate Word in Texas.



Omar Rifai

Co-Founder & Chief Growth Officer, GrubTech

Omar co-founded GrubTech, a food and beverage SaaS and Fintech start-up powering clients across 17 markets, and now serves as its Chief Growth Officer. His focus on customer centricity and quantifiable value creation has steered his teams to success over his seasoned career in finance and investing.

Omar has previously worked as a Managing Director at Gulf Capital, overseeing \$400 million in AUM of growth capital investments across emerging markets, as well as serving as a seed investor and board member at Ikcon, a leading cloud kitchen business sold to Reef Technologies in 2021.

With 16 years in private equity and experience on numerous company boards, Omar brings expertise on strategic growth, capital efficiency, fundraising, and more to the panel.

**Roaya Saleh**

Founder, Villa Mamas Restaurant Group and RS Management WLL

Chef Roaya Saleh is the President and Founder of RS Management WLL, registered in the Kingdom of Bahrain to provide consultancy in the hospitality industry across the globe. Chef Roaya is also the founder of Villa Mamas Restaurant Group since 2012, the group has opened restaurants in Bahrain, London, Abu Dhabi and Riyadh, employing over 300 staff. Villa Mamas restaurants provide full-service and retail offerings in-store and through an international online store selling products such as tea, spices, condiments, and homeware.

Chef Roaya has been featured in numerous TV shows as a culinary guest expert and judge for Masterchef and Top Chef Arabia, as well as being featured in Forbes and Financial Times. She has published two cookbooks in both English and Arabic. Chef Roaya has won various accolades recognizing her success as a businesswoman such as The Bahrain Award for Entrepreneurship, Woman of the Year and has been internationally recognized for her innovative and successful business model. She has been honoured for her philanthropic work in the Kingdom of Bahrain by the Supreme Council and other NFP organizations. She continues to focus on the empowerment of young women especially and is invested in mentoring and inspiring the younger generations to come both in the culinary field and elsewhere in the world of business as whole.

Roaya is very active in the day-to-day management of all Villa Mamas restaurants and is looking forward to expanding both the VM brand as well as exciting new concepts worldwide.

Moderator**Ameera Mohamed**

Senior Associate, Bahrain FinTech Bay

Ameera Mohamed leads the acceleration initiatives at Bahrain FinTech Bay, curating innovation-focused programs tailored for financial institutions and government entities. She designs, executes, and manages acceleration activities targeting a diverse range of startups and youth, aligning programs with the evolving needs of program partners. Through the acceleration programs, she has supported over 60 startups and young entrepreneurs with tech-enabled and FinTech solutions, guiding them to seamlessly integrate available technology into their business solutions, navigate Bahrain's ecosystem, and access further growth opportunities. She also manages relations with VC partners, actively facilitating the sharing of investment prospects within Bahrain and strategically maximizing their engagement within the FinTech ecosystem.

Ameera will further extend her expertise towards the “Innovate for Bahrain” initiative, where she will deliver innovation-focused programs, aiming to foster the growth and innovation of startups and Bahrain's talent, ensuring a forward-thinking and innovation-driven community.

Ameera graduated with a BSc degree in Banking and Finance from Bahrain Polytechnic, showcasing a strong foundation in the industry. She has also volunteered with Mutamahin and CFA Society Bahrain, contributing to the organization of talent development programs and events for the financial industry.