



The Arab knowledge war has begun, with the boom in academic education generating major institutional contracts with the West. While Saudia Arabia's King Abdullah University is spending US\$12.5 billion dollars on importing education, Ivy League universities are opening campuses all over the Gulf. But are those institutions the right response? Can US or European models of education be exported like global commodities? Does their physical and institutional scale relate to the region?

This year's Winter School will focus on issues related to education, civil society and its spatialities. We will tap into Sharjah, teasing out its unique history, development, problems and potentials. At present Sharjah is a suburban, relatively conservative and not yet neo-liberal global city à la nearby Dubai. The school precedes the 2009 Sharjah Biennial, one of the most celebrated cultural events in the Arab world, which since its inception in 1993 has formed a cultural bridge between practitioners and institutions. In the context of proliferation of biennials all over the world, the Sharjah Biennial can be understood as a laboratory empowering individuals and initiatives to develop work unconstrained by market forces.

Similar to the Biennial, the Winter School is set up as a temporary framework. We will investigate and generate small-scale holistic and potentially permanent scenarios that will be tested through design, challenged through critical interrogation and developed in parallel with a content structure that supersedes the current models at play. Our investigative design work will take the model of the Winter School as a starting point for proposing alternative spaces, models and time-lapses for future institutions and knowledge production in the region.

Teaching staff will include Murtaza Vali, Matthieu Wellner, Aaron Levy, International Festival, Markus Miessen, and Zak Kyes (others tbc).

**Eligibility**  
The workshop is open to current architecture students, recent graduates, young designers and architects, as well as young professionals and others from related fields who are interested in exploring the conditions of contemporary architecture and urbanism.

**Schedule**  
The workshop is scheduled to run from 17 to 25 January 2009. Full-time participation is required on each day of the workshop leading up to the final presentation on 25 January. The deadline for applications is 5 December 2008. Applications after this date will be considered if space is available.

Application forms and additional information are available online from [www.aaschool.net](http://www.aaschool.net). All participants are responsible for securing any travel visa required for entry to Dubai, and are advised to contact their home embassy well in advance. After payment of fees the AA School can provide a letter confirming participation in the workshop.

To secure a place in the workshop applicants are advised to contact the AA as soon as possible. Places can only be reserved upon receipt of the full fee and a completed application form (including a short written statement saying why you are interested in the course) sent to: Sandra Sanna, Administrative Co-ordinator of the AA Global School.

The workshop will be conducted in various studios in the vibrant city centre. Participants will have access to studio facilities, and are advised to bring their own laptops, digital cameras, model-making or any other design tools they wish to use during the workshop. Please ensure that all equipment is covered by insurance. The AA School takes no responsibility for items lost or stolen whilst attending or travelling to the workshop.

**Accommodation & Fees**  
Accommodation is not provided, but there are a number of affordable facilities nearby. The fee for the workshop is £545, payable to the Architectural Association School of Architecture. This does not include flights or accommodation, but does include a non-refundable AA Membership subscription valid for one year. AA Members receive regular mailings and newsletters, and have exclusive access to live webcasts of AA lectures and an online archive of AA publications. Those based in London can use the school's libraries and participate fully in the school's programme of events. For more information on AA Membership please visit [aaschool.ac.uk/members](http://aaschool.ac.uk/members).

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**AA Visiting School**  
The AA Visiting School is a worldwide network of design workshops and other events organised by the Architectural Association School of Architecture. The AA is the world's most international school of architecture, with nearly 80 per cent of its 530 full-time students coming to London from 50 or more countries. By taking the AA's acclaimed unit-based forms of teaching and public programme of lectures and events to regional settings and world cities, the AA Visiting School allows a global audience of participants to confront the major issues shaping architecture, design and urban cultures at the outset of the 21st century.

If your school or organisation is interested in hosting a future AA Visiting School programme, please contact Brett Steele, AA School Director, for further information. More information about the AA School can be found online at [aaschool.net](http://aaschool.net).

# SPACES AND SCALES OF KNOWLEDGE

## SCENARIOS FOR ALTERNATIVE INSTITUTIONS IN THE ARAB WORLD

AA Winter Visiting School Dubai  
17–25 January 2009

For international visiting students  
and architects

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