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Qatar Biobank and Qatar Genome Programs Road Map to Success

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Qatar Biobank “QBB” is a large-scale, long term medical research initiative for the population of Qatar, which will serve as a platform and driver of biomedical research to achieve benefits for Qatar’s communities. Following on from the announcement of the Qatar Genome Project in 2013 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation “QF”, a National Genome Committee “NGC” is tasked with the role of driving and advising the development of the Genome Project in Qatar. To ensure the successful implementation and completion of a project of this complexity, it was important to consider carefully the organizational structure of Genome Qatar to enable success, so the decision was to establish QG project within the existing framework of the government of QBB. A road map constitutes of seven key building blocks, were identified to address the critical success factors and be managed and overseen by the Board of Trustee for both QBB & QG program. The seven building blocks are 1-Develop a National Health Information System, 2-Enhancement of the National Biobank, 3-Develop Genomics Infrastructure, 4-Develop Policy Framework for genomics and precision medicine, 5-Workforce Development, 6-Research & Partnership and 7-Clinical/Medical implementation. To successfully accomplish this ambitious role a road map is initiated by a pilot phase to establish the infrastructure and human capacity for 12-18 months to tackle problems, identify loopholes, analyze the needs and optimize systems that are needed for the entire Qatar Genome project. The aim will be to sequence 1000-3000 genomes to develop a good model of practice for regulatory compliant, sample collection and storage, high quality data generation, analysis and annotation pipeline development and data warehouse establishment.

Biography

Asma Al-Thani is an Associate Professor of Virology at the Biomedical Program - Department of Health Sciences- College of Arts and Sciences. Al-Thani obtained her Ph.D degree in (2005) from the University of London in the United Kingdom. Al-Thani also fulfills roles as Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar since 2011, as Vice Chairperson of the Qatar Biobank Board since 2010 at Qatar foundation, nominate to be Chair of National Genome Qatar Committee since December 2013 and Director of Biomedical Research Center at Qatar University from Fall 2014. She also has numerous published articles in her field of expertise including, fifteen published papers in peer-reviewed international journals. She has also obtained several research grants, including 7 Qatar university grants, 13 UREP grants and 4 NPRP grants.

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