



AFALULA

FRENCH AGENCY  
FOR ALULA  
DEVELOPMENT

AFALULA

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GÉRARD MESTRALLET, AFALULA EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN



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## A UNIQUE HERITAGE



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A new economic and touristic development model, focused on the absolute preservation of the environment, respectful of history, and inclusive of local populations. Through art and culture, the project will be dedicated to offering an authentic touristic experience faithful to the traditions of hospitality in the Arab World.

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**Gérard Mestrallet**  
Afalula Executive Chairman



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By initiating an ambitious transformation plan (Vision 2030), Saudi Arabia has confirmed its commitment to broaden its exposure to the world.

Strengthening the Kingdom's cultural and historical outreach, through its stunning heritage, is one of the necessary conditions, established by Saudi Arabia.

Developing national and international tourism is another condition. It aims at promoting the extraordinary richness and diversity of the territory to make Saudi Arabia a world-class destination, appreciated by visitors from around the globe.

In April 2018, Saudi Arabia and France signed an intergovernmental agreement regarding the development of AlUla region, a flagship project which will make AlUla one of the country's cultural capitals.

The region, as vast as Belgium, benefits from a unique potential, still largely unexploited. Located at the crossroads of Middle Eastern routes of exchange, within desert landscapes of breath-taking beauty, it has been for millennia a wonderful meeting point of civilizations who left behind numerous archaeological sites, including Nabatean, Roman and Islamic treasures.



Chosen for its cultural outreach and its ability to transform a cultural heritage into an international touristic destination, France set up the French Agency for AIUla development (Afalula) to develop the project side-by-side with its Saudi partner, the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU).

Both ambassador and promotor of the project, the Agency's mission is to gather the full breadth of French expertise and the best and most specialist companies. Its team is made up of leading experts in the project's key fields : cultural engineering, archaeology, architecture and urban planning, agriculture and botany, tourism, education, security, water and environmental sustainable management.

Saudi Arabia and France share a vision to implement a new economic and touristic development model, focused on the absolute preservation of the environment, respectful of history, and inclusive of local populations. Through art and culture, the project will be dedicated to offering an authentic touristic experience faithful to the traditions of hospitality in the Arab World.

France is proud to contribute to these exciting challenges which will participate in Saudi Arabia's transformation.



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## THE FRENCH-SAUDI BILATERAL AGREEMENT

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ON THE 10TH APRIL 2018, A BILATERAL AGREEMENT IS SIGNED BY FRANCE AND SAUDI ARABIA AT ELYSEE PALACE, IN THE PRESENCE OF H.R.H. CROWN PRINCE OF THE KINGDOM MOHAMMED BIN SALMAN, AND EMMANUEL MACRON, PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

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### FRANCE, A UNIQUE PARTNER FOR A MAJOR CULTURAL PROJECT

The agreement covers the economic, touristic and cultural development of AlUla region in Saudi Arabia. France will support the Kingdom by bringing its world-class expertise and know-how in the fields of tourism, culture, archaeology, infrastructures, education and sustainable management of natural resources.

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### AFALULA AGENCY IS BORN

The French Agency for AlUla Development (Afalula), headed by Gérard Mestrallet, is created to support Saudi Arabia during the project development.



# THE FRENCH AGENCY FOR ALULA DEVELOPMENT

- The French Agency
- Co-construction of AlUla project
- Afalula core expertise
- French know-how

# THE FRENCH AGENCY FOR ALULA DEVELOPMENT



## CREATION

On the 13th July 2018, France set up a dedicated agency headquartered in Paris, AFALULA, to support Saudi Arabia during the project development.

## MISSION

Its mission is twofold: co-develop the project with Saudi Arabia and mobilize the full breadth of French expertise (specialists, operators, companies) regarding the project's key fields.

## ORGANIZATION

Headed by Gérard Mestrallet, the Agency incorporates the best French skills and specialists around core expertise centres.

## STRUCTURE

The French State is the sole shareholder of the Agency.

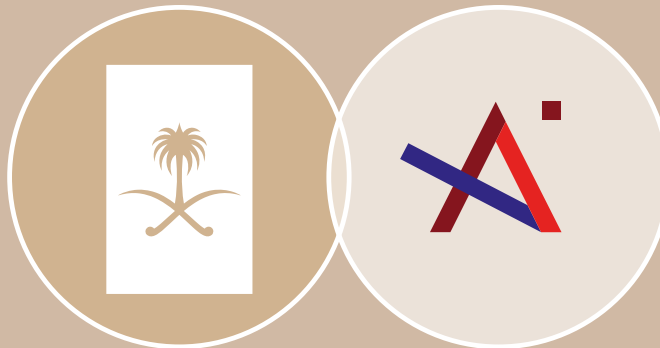


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# CO- CONSTRUCTION OF ALULA PROJECT

THE FRENCH AGENCY WORKS CLOSELY WITH ITS SAUDI PARTNER,  
THE RCU LOCATED IN RIYADH AND ALULA. FOUNDED IN JULY 2017 AND  
HEADED BY H.R.H. CROWN PRINCE OF THE KINGDOM MOHAMMED BIN  
SALMAN, ITS MISSION IS TO PROTECT AND DEVELOP ALULA AND PROMOTE ITS  
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE, AND ITS POPULATION.

The Royal  
Commission for AlUla  
(RCU)



The French  
Agency for AlUla  
Development  
(Afalula)



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# AFALULA CORE EXPERTISE

## CULTURE & HERITAGE

Heritage protection  
Archaeological sites  
development and creation  
of a museum complex around  
a research centre

## ARCHITECTURE & DEVELOPMENT

Preservation and valorisation  
of the natural and cultural  
assets  
Sustainable planning of  
touristic infrastructure  
Socioeconomic development

## HUMAN CAPITAL

Development and  
reinforcement of the  
governorate's human and  
training capabilities

## WATER & ENVIRONMENT

Sustainable management  
of water, energy, resources  
and natural environment

### **TOURISM & HOSPITALITY**

Turning AIUla into a world-class destination, reference for sustainable tourism

### **SECURITY & SAFETY**

Security plan and strategy development

### **BOTANICAL PRODUCTS**

Concepts and products development on the Incense trade route  
Valorisation of local natural resources

### **AGRICULTURE**

Development of a sustainable and economically viable agriculture





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# FRENCH KNOW- HOW

**1<sup>st</sup>**

**world  
touristic  
destination**

for more than  
twenty years

**1<sup>st</sup>**

**most visited  
museum**

(Louvre, 10 million  
visitors per year)

**1<sup>st</sup>**

**luxury  
industry**

with 25% of the global  
market share<sup>1</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> Deloitte – Luxury goods - Top 100

<sup>(2)</sup> Soft Power Ranking (2017)





**26 000**

**cultural events**

organised outside of its borders

**47**

**countries**

supported by France in the UNESCO world heritage listing process

**1<sup>st</sup>**

**country**

in the « Soft Power » <sup>(2)</sup> ranking

**2<sup>nd</sup>**

**most represented country**

at the CES Tech Show in 2017 in Las Vegas

# FRENCH KNOW- HOW

## A NATION DEEPLY ROOTED IN CULTURE

Saudi Arabia decided to select France as the unique partner of this major project, no doubt primarily because of its cultural reach. Home of the arts, France has placed culture at the foundation of its celebrated art of living, attracting epicureans from all over the world, thanks to leading cultural operators:

Musée du Louvre, Versailles, Grand Palais, Musée du quai Branly, Musée d'Orsay, Chambord, Château de Fontainebleau, Musée Picasso, Centre Pompidou, Mobilier National, Cité de l'Architecture, Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Palais de Tokyo, Musée d'Art Moderne, Musée Guimet, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Fondation Cartier, Culturespaces, etc.

As a consequence of its passion for creation, France has developed an ability to promote tangible and intangible heritage and to become an outstandingly welcoming nation for visitors.

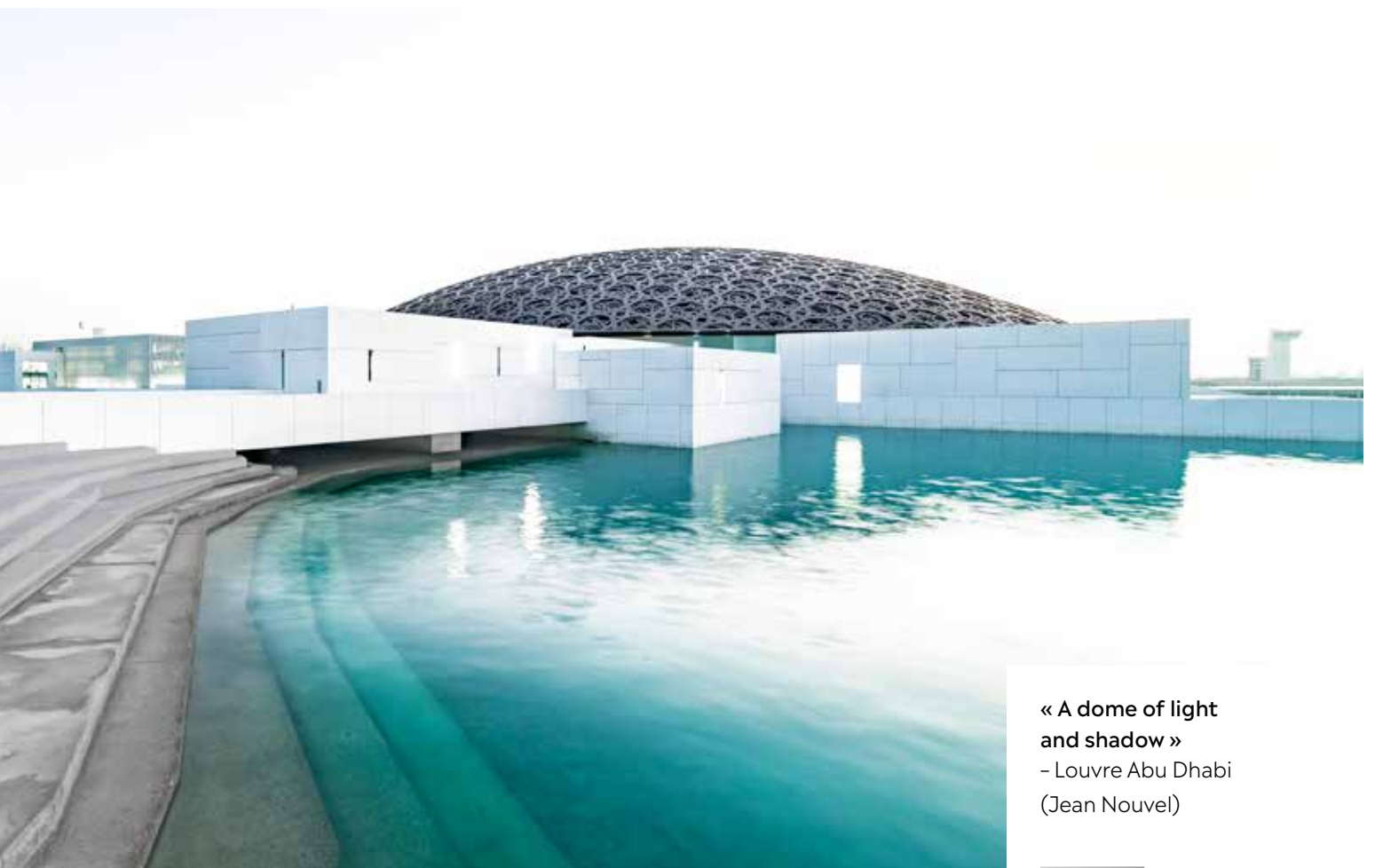
## A UNIQUE ABILITY TO TRANSFORM A CULTURAL HERITAGE INTO AN INTERNATIONAL TOURISTIC DESTINATION

France has a global expertise in all fields related to heritage preservation and valorisation: archaeology, history of arts, museology, scenography, etc.

World-class operational excellence in project execution (civil engineering, coding, architecture, agronomy).







**« A dome of light  
and shadow »**

– Louvre Abu Dhabi  
(Jean Nouvel)

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**Yves Saint Laurent museum  
in Marrakech**  
– more than 300 000 visitors  
during the opening year

# FRENCH KNOW- HOW



## CULTURAL PROJECT

Development of a cultural heritage into a world touristic destination

- **Angkor site:** site resurrection using the most advanced archaeological techniques (1 million yearly visitors)
- **Yves Saint Laurent museum (Marrakesh):** Touristic complex development around a core museum (300 000 visitors in the first year)
- **Worldwide festival organisation:** FIAC (contemporary Art), Cannes (Cinema), Avignon (Theatre), Angouleme (Comic), Aix-en-Provence (Lyric Art) (750 000 yearly visitors)





## TECHNOLOGY

Digital and tech serving culture and tourism

- **Digitalization** and reproduction of The Chauvet Cave
- **Virtual and augmented reality:** strong eco-system of start-ups (Iconem, Geekopolis, immersive interactive experience)

## ART OF LIVING

An art of living to serve tourism

- **Palaces:** Meurice, Plaza Athénée, Crillon, Royal Monceau, Cap-Eden-Roc, etc.
- **Luxury and beauty:** LVMH, Hermès, Dior, Chanel, Kering, L'Oréal, Clarins, etc.
- **Gastronomy:** Alain Ducasse, Thierry Marx, Hélène Darroze, Yannick Alléno, Anne-Sophie Pic, Eric Frechon, etc.
- **Culinary Art:** Bernardaud, Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres, Ercuis, Faïencerie de Gien

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Leading international players

- **Water and Waste:** Suez, Veolia, Saur, pioneers in the Middle East
- **Power and sustainable energy:** Engie and EDF, global leaders in electricity and energy transition
- **Construction:** Vinci, Bouygues, Eiffage

## TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT

Excellence in conception and execution

- **Transport:** RATP Group, global leader of public transportation for tourism
- **Airport Structure:** ADP, Vinci
- **Urban development:** sustainable development through eco-touristic plans (Natural regional Park of Verdon / The Mont-Saint-Michel 2020)

## RESEARCH & TRAINING

A wide educational network

- **International:** The Sorbonne Abu Dhabi
- **France:** INRAP (Archaeological Research), École du Louvre (Art History), The Cadre noir of Saumur (training of elite horse-riders), « 42 School » (coding), ISIPCA (fragrance and cosmetics school), Ferrandi (Europe's leading culinary institute)

## SECURITY

A strong experience in security

- **Global solutions for crowd management** through Thales (JFK/ Dubai/Muscat airports, pilgrimages to Mecca)
- **Major sport events:** Euro 2016, 2024 Olympic Games

# ALULA PROJECT

- A major project to transform Saudi Arabia
- A region that bears witness to thousands of years of splendors of the Arab World
- Sustainable development, the project cornerstone
- Authenticity and well-being





# ALULA PROJECT

## A MAJOR PROJECT TO TRANSFORM SAUDI ARABIA

At the forefront of the Vision 2030 plan initiated by the Saudi government to modernize the country, the AlUla project is part of a series of major projects (Neom, Al-Qiddiya, Red Sea Project) to diversify its economy and raise its profile from an international perspective.



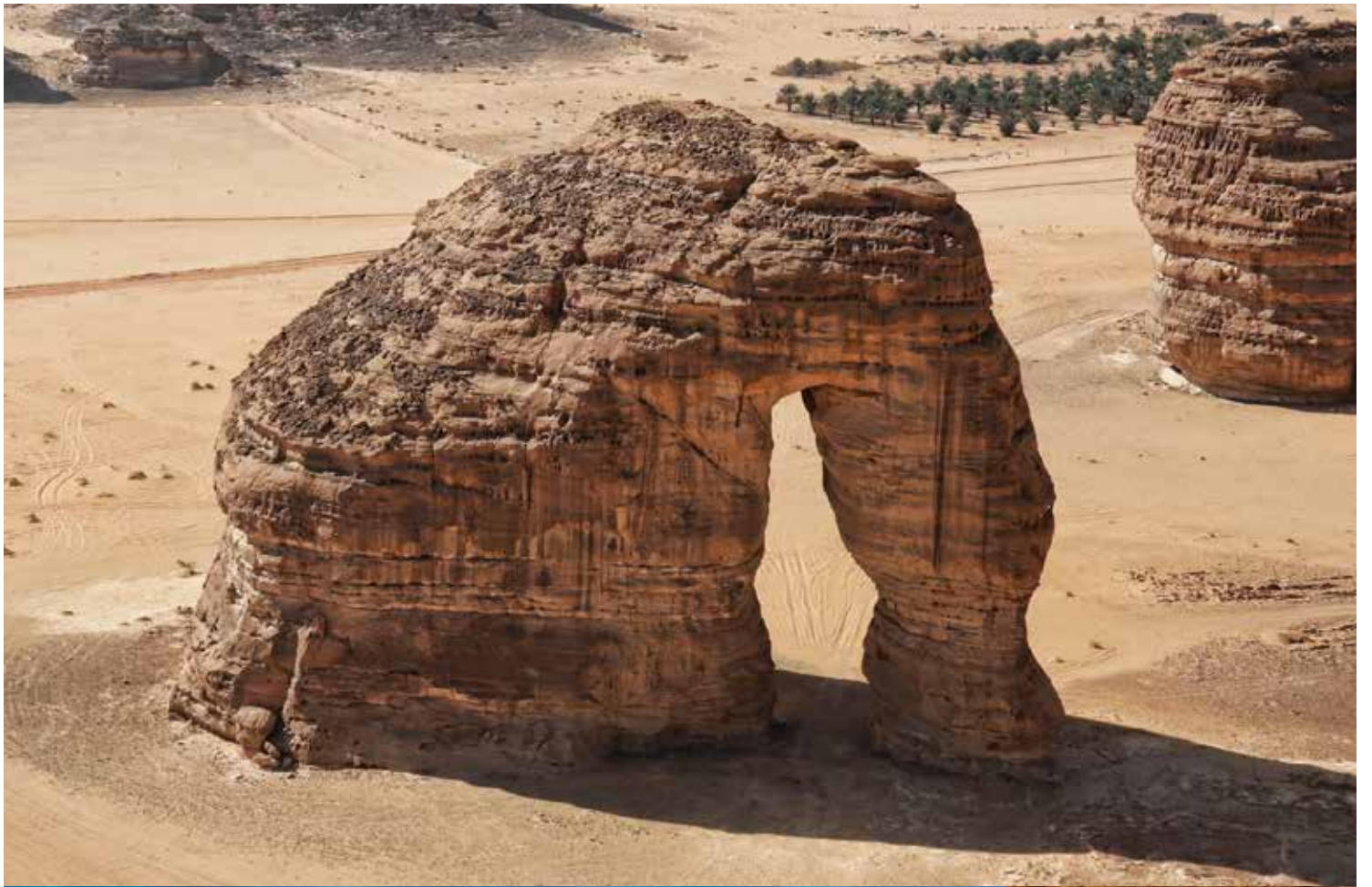
The cornerstone of Saudi Arabia's cultural and touristic ambitions, the AlUla project will develop an archaeological, cultural and touristic complex -an open-air living museum- in a region in the North-West of the country. A major investment which aims to make the AlUla region the Kingdom's cultural capital.

## A REGION THAT BEARS WITNESS TO THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF ARAB WORLD HERITAGE

AlUla valley, whose Madain Saleh (Hegra) site is listed as Unesco world heritage, is known for its stunning landscapes and its archaeological treasures - often compared to the vestiges at Petra - that attest to thousands of years of history.

By protecting and showcasing the region, Saudi Arabia intends to reinscribe these cultural treasures in its millennia-old history and reveal how the Kingdom has played a principal role in the history of mankind.





# ALULA PROJECT

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, THE CORNERSTONE OF THE PROJECT

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In accordance with the will of Saudi Arabia and of France, AlUla has the ambition to become, thanks to the most advanced knowledge and techniques, a flagship project in terms of sustainable development.

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Natural heritage restoration, conservation and valorisation (landscapes, oasis, vegetation, wildlife, ecosystems) by limiting urban sprawl and impact of human activities on life and geology.

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Cultural heritage (archaeological sites, Old Town) restoration, protection and valorisation through rational management plans.

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Resources and infrastructures sustainable management (water, energy, waste, mobility).

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Local population inclusion through the implementation of training and through the socioeconomic development of the territory.



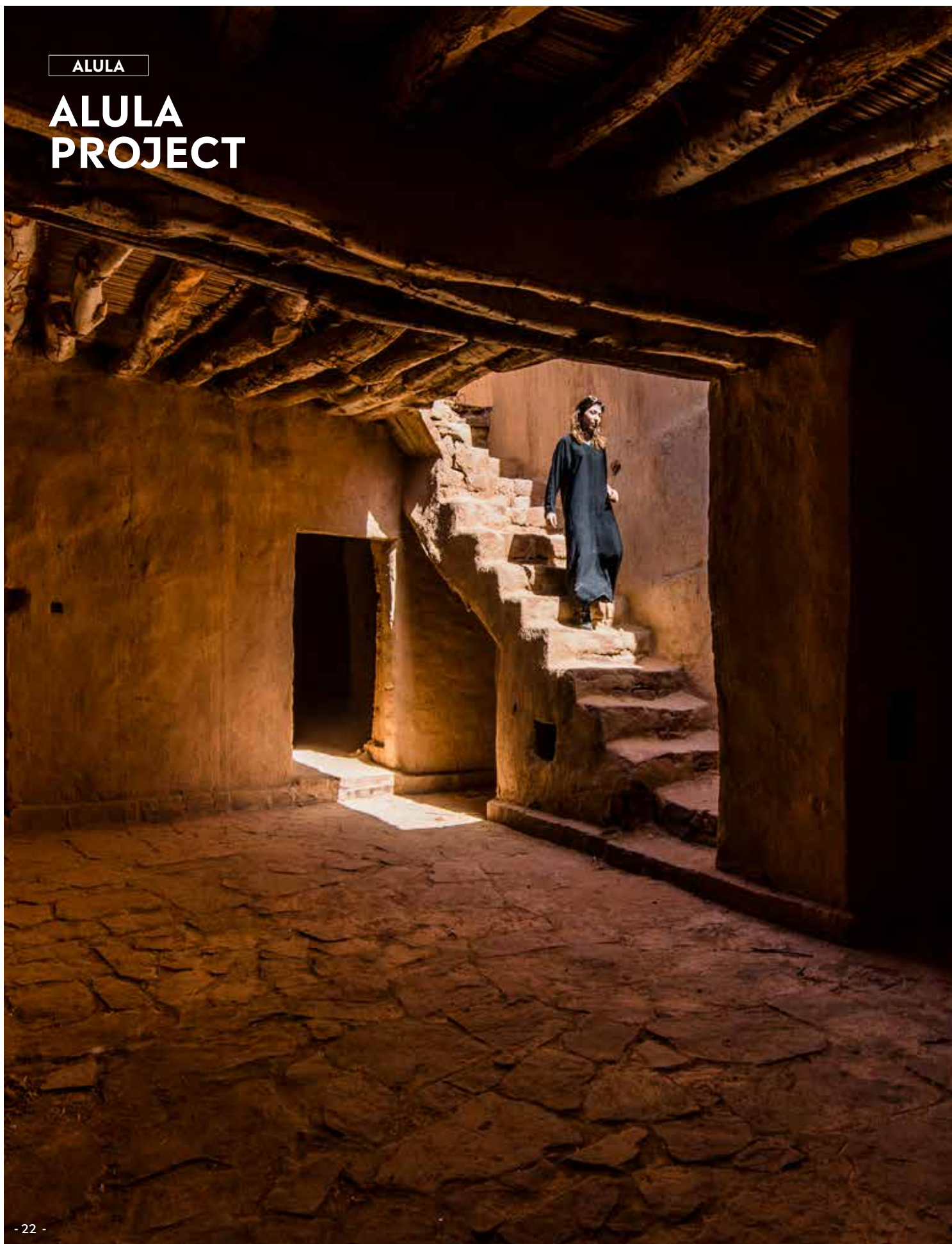






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# ALULA PROJECT





## AUTHENTICITY AND WELL-BEING

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A journey into AlUla is firstly an experience of diverse cultures, from ancient civilizations to the living traditions of the local population.

The project's mission is to celebrate, without altering, this resounding history.

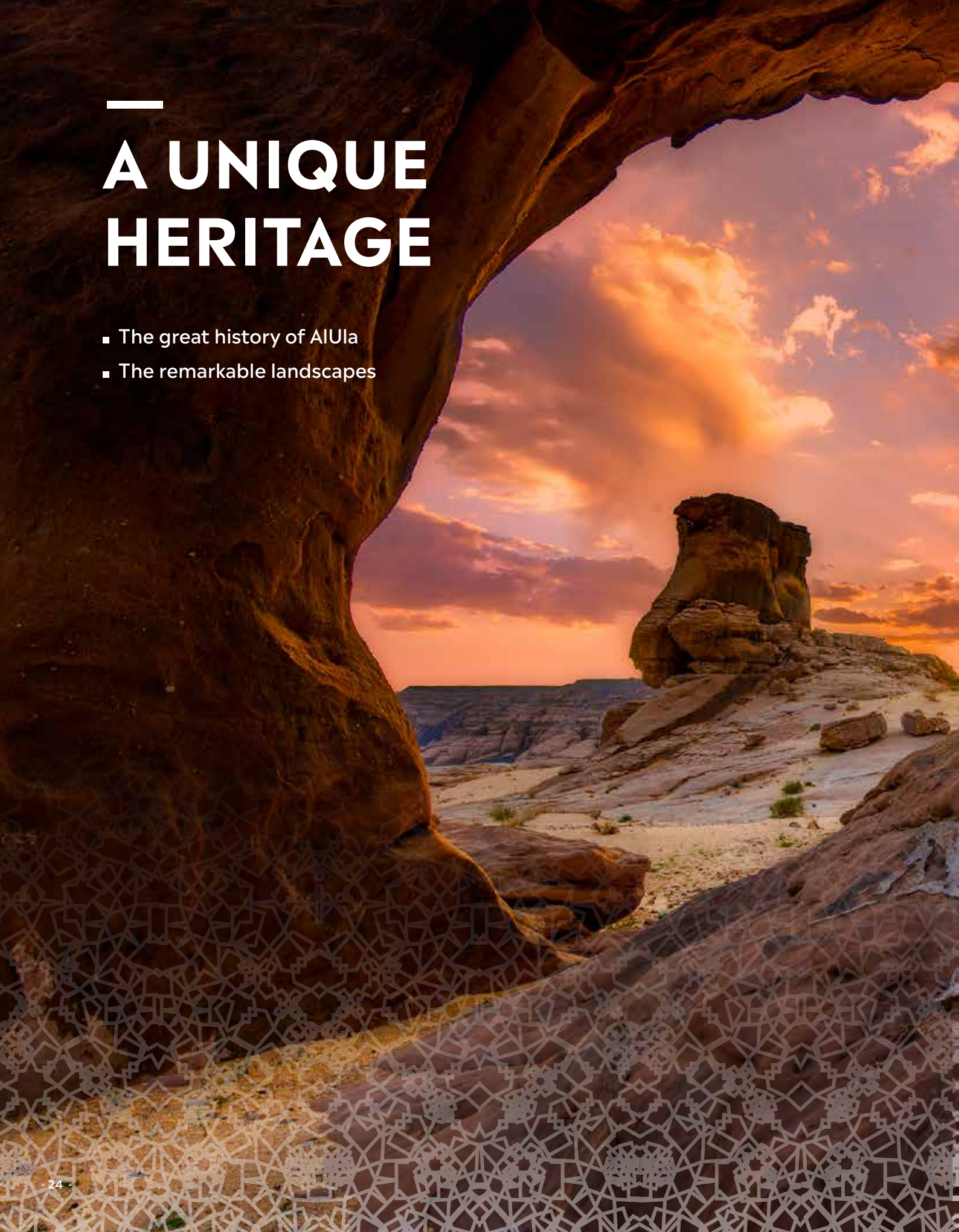
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It is also an experience of the desert, its stunning landscapes, its everlasting silence, its unique light and its oasis whose palm groves shelter travelers with shade and coolness.

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The project aims to highlight all the assets that make AlUla unique in order to offer the traveller a cultural (archaeological routes, museums, old town) and natural journey that will lead the way to reflexion and well-being.





# A UNIQUE HERITAGE

- The great history of AlUla
- The remarkable landscapes





# A UNIQUE HERITAGE

## THE GREAT HISTORY OF ALULA

### THE MEMORY OF CIVILISATIONS

In collective memory, the history of AlUla and Saudi Arabia is fundamentally linked to Islam. Each year, millions of pilgrims follow in the footsteps of Muhammad, from Mecca to Medina, to pray on the Prophet's tomb, tread upon the mosque's immaculate marble and touch the Kaaba black stone, the most sacred Islamic site.

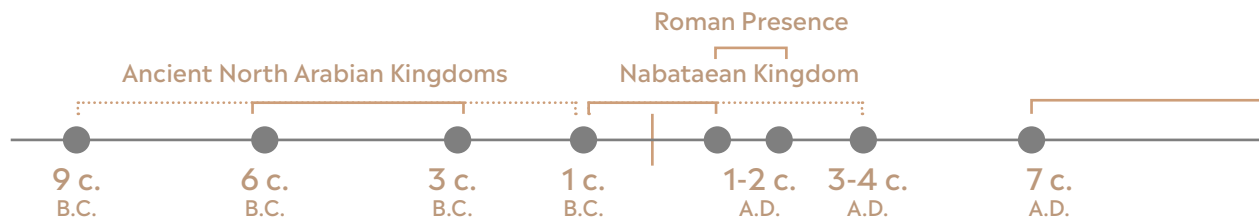
In reality, its history is far older and dates back to thousands of years. Located at the crossroads of continents, Saudi Arabia has been a fantastic meeting point for civilizations who left behind an abundant heritage.

AlUla is an eloquent symbol of this richness. For centuries, its oasis has been a crossing point for caravans on the Incense trade route, which connected Asia, Africa and Europe, transiting spices, myrrh, cotton, ebony and silk.

The oasis city, once named Dedan, has successively been ruled by Ancient North Arabian Kingdoms (Dedan then Lihyan), the Nabataeans who founded, 20 kilometers away, the antique city of Hegra, and the Roman Empire, before Muhammad's arrival in 630 A.D. during his campaign against the Byzantine army. All these civilizations stamped the region with their unique culture, leaving exceptional archaeological sites for posterity (see next page).

Carrying the memory of their predecessors, Muslims reused the stones of the Dedanite and Lihyanite ruins to build in the 13th century what we call today the Old Town of AlUla.

The reason Saudi Arabia launched the AlUla project is primarily to reconnect with this great history and to become one of the most active contributors to human history.



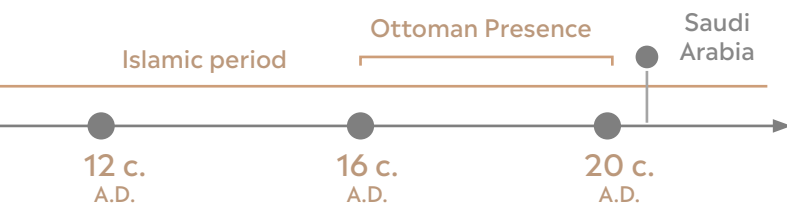


## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN ALULA

AL-KHURAYBAH, capital of the Liyhanite Kingdom during the first millenary B.C., has thousands of inscriptions and ancestral artworks carved in the sandstone.

The Nabataeans, an ancient civilization of Arabian merchants, founded the ancient city of HEGRA - sibling of Petra - whose flagship site Madain Saleh which is listed as Unesco world heritage since 2008 shelters 138 rocky tombs, sanctuaries, wells, decorated frontages, etc.

In 106 A.D., the Roman emperor Trajan annexed the Kingdom and marked AlUla Valley with Greek and Latin influence: military forts, Latin inscriptions and works.



# A UNIQUE HERITAGE

## REMARKABLE LANDSCAPES

### THE PANORAMAS

A vast desert area located in Madinah province, AlUla conceals remarkable and diversified landscapes including stunning rarities such as: yellow sand panoramas, sandstone canyons, black lunar volcanic plateaus, red shaded landscapes, natural arches.

The dispersion of the sites draws the form of a constellation which guides the visitors route. If AlUla is unique in the world, it is not only because of its different attributes, but because of the auspicious occurrence of all of them in one place.

### THE OASIS

At the heart of these desert landscapes, one can discover, passing by a narrow sand valley, surrounded by high sandstone cliffs, an oasis whose palm grove sheltered the caravans on the Incense trade route.

The oasis is AlUla's heart and soul ; civilizations have long been taking root on these fertile lands, allowing them to express the genius of their culture.



















**ALULA**

# ALULA



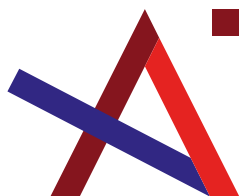






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**AFALULA**

FRENCH AGENCY  
FOR ALULA  
DEVELOPMENT

82, RUE DE COURCELLES  
75008 PARIS - FRANCE

Tel. : +33 (0)1 44 55 08 15  
Mail : [contact@afalula.com](mailto:contact@afalula.com)

[www.afalula.com](http://www.afalula.com)