

Press release

Paris, December 7, 2021

The French Agency for AIUla Development welcomes the signing of a partnership between the Royal Commission for AIUla and the French school of culinary arts and hospitality management FERRANDI Paris

In April 2018, Saudi Arabia and France signed an intergovernmental agreement on the sustainable development of the AIUla region and its transformation into a world-class cultural and tourist destination.

Born from this agreement, the French Agency for the Development of AIUla (AFALULA) aims to mobilize all French expertise (experts, operators, companies) and to support, within a co-construction framework, its Saudi partner, the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU).

The Agency brings together some of the world's best experts in all the key areas of the project: museography, archaeology, architecture and urban planning, agriculture and botany, tourism, education, infrastructure, horses, security, water and environmental management.

The joint desire of Saudi Arabia and France is to implement, through the AIUla project, a new model of economic and touristic development focused on the preservation of the environment, respectful of history, territories and inclusive of the local population. This component of sustainable development is at the heart of the bilateral agreement signed between the two nations.

During the visit of the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Jeddah), on 4 December 2021, a major partnership was signed with the French school FERRANDI Paris for the development of the International College for Tourism & Hospitality (ICTH) in AIUla, a training college for culinary arts, hotel management and tourism professions.

"The signing of this partnership with the French school of excellence FERRANDI Paris confirms the entry of the AIUla project into its implementation phase and the progress towards its great ambition: the transformation of this region with its exceptional heritage into a world-class cultural and tourist destination. France, renowned for its art of living and the world's leading tourist destination, is a key ally in achieving this goal." **Gérard Mestrallet, Executive Chairman of AFALULA**

"FERRANDI Paris is honoured and proud to support Saudi Arabia in the development of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 programme. This contract will help to promote the excellence of FERRANDI Paris' training in culinary arts and hospitality management in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East. " **Jean-Paul Rigal, Chairman of the Board of Directors of FERRANDI Paris**

The contract signed with the French school FERRANDI Paris aims to create a training college in culinary arts, hotel management and tourism professions

The Trademark License and Technical Assistance Agreement signed between the Royal Commission for AIUla and the FERRANDI Paris School ensures AIUla the exclusivity for the Kingdom of the brand and the excellence of the training of the prestigious Parisian school.



This agreement makes FERRANDI Paris the academic partner of AIUla's future International College for Tourism & Hospitality. This college will offer diploma courses in culinary arts, hotel management and tourism professions, to meet the priority needs of local players in the restaurant, tourism and hospitality sectors: about 14,000 new jobs will be available in the coming years in AIUla.

The school will also provide field support aimed at the implementation of the institution's quality standards and pedagogical excellence, while complying with Saudi educational standards.

A first cohort of 15 hotel management students will be officially launched in January 2022. The selection process of these young women and men from AIUla made it possible to verify the enthusiasm of the local population for this training offer. The local hotel sector will soon be able to welcome these new talents trained on the FERRANDI Paris competency framework.

About AFALULA (French Agency for the Development of AIUla)

Born from an intergovernmental agreement signed by France and Saudi Arabia in April 2018, the French Agency for the Development of AIUla (Afalula) was founded in Paris in July 2018. Afalula aims to support, in a spirit of co-construction, its Saudi partner, the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU), in the sustainable economic, touristic and cultural development of AIUla, a region with an exceptional natural and cultural heritage located in the Northwest of Saudi Arabia. The agency's mission is to mobilize all French know-how and expertise and to bring together the best operators and companies in the fields of archaeology, museography, architecture, urban planning, tourism, hospitality, infrastructure, education, security, agriculture, botany and sustainable management of natural resources.

About RCU (Royal Commission for AIUla)

The Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) was established by Royal Decree in July 2017 to preserve and develop AIUla, a region with outstanding natural and cultural heritage, located in northwestern Saudi Arabia. The RCU's long-term plan takes a sensitive, sustainable and responsible approach to urban and economic development in order to preserve the natural and historical heritage of the region, while making AIUla a privileged place where it is possible to live, work and visit. The plan encompasses numerous initiatives in the fields of archaeology, tourism, culture, education and the arts, to address different priorities in economic diversification, empowerment of local communities and the preservation of heritage, as part of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 agenda.

About FERRANDI Paris

Founded in 1920 by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Paris Île-de-France, FERRANDI Paris offers training from CAP to bac +6, preparing students for the professions of gastronomy and hotel management. An institution of excellence, FERRANDI Paris is the only school in the hotel and restaurant sector, whose Bachelor's degrees are referred to by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

FERRANDI trains 2500 students and 2000 professionals and individuals looking for a career change in France and abroad. FERRANDI Paris offers courses on four campuses: Paris, Jouy-en-Josas, Saint-Gratien and Bordeaux. FERRANDI is also a meeting place where companies, chefs, associations and federations work and reflect on the progress in the sector.



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