

Press Release

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More Than 1,800 Schoolchildren take part in inaugural edition of Nation-Wide A.R.M. Holding School Programme

5 October 2021, Dubai, United Arab Emirates – A nation-wide school programme supported by private investment firm and multi-focused economic enabler A.R.M. Holding, saw over 1,800 children from 70 schools across the country participate in the week-long *Noom Project*, developed by design duo Studio Sain, which invited children to create an alternative living habitat on a fictional version of the moon.

The classroom-based art workshops that made up the *Noom Project* offered a temporary opportunity to explore how a new society might be constructed, and encouraged the students to deconstruct boundaries in order to generate imaginary, intuitive and innovative objects. Alongside the UAE's space mission to Mars and sending the first Emirati into space, the workshop was conceptualized to test ideas around the central question, "How would you construct a sustainable community in outer space?"

"Art and culture often fall short in the very STEM-led curricula in our local schools. This means pupils can miss out on crucial opportunities to hone their creative skills and thinking. The A.R.M. Holding's Children's Programme, by introducing bespoke, artist-designed workshops to local schools, provides children with opportunities to grow and develop their creative thinking and imagination by familiarizing them with a wide range of art and design practices," said **Mohammad Saeed Al Shehhi, CEO of A.R.M. Holding.** *"It's not only about raising the next generation of artists, but also about providing every pupil with the creative skills and experiences they need to succeed in their future careers. The A.R.M. Holding Children's Programme reflects our commitment to invest in, and nurture, the next generation."*

Noom Project falls under the umbrella of the A.R.M. Holding Children's Programme, one of several cultural and educational initiatives organized by the investment firm and aligns with the company's strong commitment to give back to the community it operates in. The programme aims to provide school children in the UAE with opportunities to grow and develop their interest and understanding of the arts through interacting with a roster of international artists and familiarizing them with a wide range of art and design practices.

The programme received praise from many of the participating teachers, students and facilitators:

"Our pupils at Brighton College Dubai thoroughly emersed themselves in the Noom Project workshop. They had great fun working imaginatively, creatively and intuitively when making their Tom Sachs inspired bricolage 3D sculptures. The opportunity to invite creative professionals back into the College art studios again is just wonderful as our young artists gain so much by being exposed to these creative experiences."

Ashley Ibbitson, Head of Art at Brighton College Dubai

“Many of our tasks and jobs are being handed over to AI and machines today. However, creativity is one of the skills we still struggle to pass on to machines; as such, nurturing creativity in young students can be the difference between them having stable careers or potentially struggling in their future.”

Shayan Rahman Nezhad, Workshop Facilitator

Following the conclusion of the programme, each of the participating schools is nominating the best-performing student in the workshop, who will be invited to join an exclusive astronomy experience at Al Thuraya Astronomy Center in Dubai, comprising an astronomer-led talk, followed by the opportunity to observe the moon and planets through a telescope, a planetarium show, and a tour around the centre.

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About A.R.M. Holding

A.R.M. Holding is a private investment firm and multi-focused economic enabler that creates synergies and opportunities through local, regional, and global investments. At the core of the company's business strategy is its commitment to impactful investments, actively employing its resources to advance society and empower its players to pursue innovative solutions and inspire a better future. It collaborates with like-minded organizations and leverages its network and partnerships to create meaningful relationships and growth opportunities. A.R.M. Holding's investments are focused on tech-enabled industries and sophisticated technologies around the world that demonstrate strong potential for long-term positive social impact. It also holds equity stakes in some of Dubai's foremost companies in a variety of sectors including Banking, Telecom, FMCG, Real Estate, and Hospitality. A.R.M. Holding has contributed to society with significant investments in numerous industries and versatile projects. In 2021, it became the first corporate patron of the Dubai Collection, the first institutional art collection in the emirate of Dubai.

About Art Dubai

Art Dubai is the Middle East's leading art fair for the local, regional and international art world. Since 2007 Art Dubai has championed art and artists from across the Middle East, MENASA (Middle East, North Africa & South Asia) and the Global South, broadening conversations about art beyond traditional Western-led geographical scopes and narratives.

In keeping with Dubai's reputation as a hub for innovation, incubation and knowledge exchange, Art Dubai provides a sustainable platform for artists and meaningful engagement with the rich cultural heritage and contemporary art practices of the region. Featuring Contemporary and Modern gallery sections, annual artist-driven

A.R.M. Holding
A.R.M. Holding Children's Programme



commissions, and collector and education programmes, the fair fosters a culture of discovery and new global perspectives.

Art Dubai is held in partnership with A.R.M. Holding. The fair is sponsored by Julius Baer, with Madinat Jumeirah as the home of the event. The Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai Culture) is the fair's strategic partner.