AGAPS
Association for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies

SAUDI ARABIA RESEARCH RESOURCE GUIDE

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GENERAL SUGGESTIONS:

- Bring state-issued photo identification and a copy of a letter of introduction from your home institution and – if you have one – from a host institution in Saudi Arabia.
- Personal introductions often produce better results than cold calling to set up meetings and sending a message on WhatsApp or Signal is more likely to get a response than a phone call. Your host institution – if you have one – can be useful in this respect.
- If you are conducting interviews bring copies of any forms and ethics statements you need your interviewees to sign and make sure you and they are agreed on the terms of the interview (on/off record or 'on background') and any eventual citation.
- Be polite and respectful at all times, dress professionally and appropriately, and be ready to answer questions about your topic of research and related issues. Engaging in conversation and 'small talk' can help build relationships of trust.
- Weekends are Friday and Saturday and keep track of religious holidays which may affect opening times and periods of closure, especially if you are conducting research during Ramadan.
- Check in advance to see if there are different sections for men and women and, if so, whether they are co-located.

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1. KING FAISAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

- **Location**: No.38, Al Olaya, Riyadh 12212.
- **Operating hours**: Sunday-Thursday, 8 am – 3.30 pm
- **What to bring**: State-issued photo ID and a letter of introduction, if you have one.
- **Contact details**: +966 11 465 2255 / kfcris@kfrcis.com
- **Website**: https://www.kfcris.com
- **Resources & Notes**:

The King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies was established in 1983 and has grown into a leading research center with a library of over 250,000 volumes, including rare and out-of-print periodicals, an audio-visual library with more than 11,000 items, and a substantial collection of Islamic manuscripts, both original texts and microfilm copies. The King Faisal Center hosts visiting fellows and scholars by arrangement and arranges regular workshops, public lectures, and other events in Riyadh.

2. KING ABDULAZIZ FOUNDATION FOR ARCHIVES AND RESEARCH

- **Location**: Al-Naserieh Dist., Riyadh, 11461
- **Operating hours**: Sunday-Thursday, call for opening hours.
- **What to bring**: State-issued photo ID and a letter of introduction, if you have one.
- **Contact details**: +966 11 401 1999 / info@darah.org.sa
- **Website**: www.darah.org.sa [N.B. link does not work as of November 2019]
- **Resources & Notes**:

The King Abdulaziz Foundation for Archives and Research (Darah) was established in 1972 and is located within the King Abdulaziz Historical Center in Riyadh. Darah holds archival records relating to the history of Saudi Arabia and the Arabian Peninsula, and has specific sections for documents, manuscripts, historical photos and films, and oral history, as well as a library.

3. KING ABDULAZIZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

- **Location**: 8251, Al Futah, Riyadh, 12632.
- **Operating hours**: Saturday-Tuesday, 8 am – 8 pm
- **What to bring**: State-issued photo ID and a letter of introduction, if you have one.
- **Contact details**: +966 11 491 1300
- **Website**: www.kapl.org.sa
- **Resources & Notes**:

Opened in 1999, the King Abdulaziz Public Library has a substantial collection of rare Arabic books, coins, maps, photographs, and holdings of private libraries that relate to the history both of Saudi Arabia and of the Arabian Peninsula. The library is in the process of acquiring rare documents and books on the rule of Saudi Arabia's founder, King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Saud.

4. KING ABDULLAH PETROLEUM STUDIES AND RESEARCH CENTER

- **Location**: Airport Road, Riyadh, 11672.
- **Operating hours**: Sunday-Thursday
- **What to bring**: State-issued photo ID and a letter of introduction, if you have one.
- **Contact details**: +966 11 225 1064 / research@kapsarc.org or info@kapsarc.org
- **Website**: https://www.kapsarc.org
- **Resources & Notes**:

The King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center is an independent, non-profit institution that conducts research into global energy economics with a focus on policymaking, technology, and the environment. KAPSARC is heavily collaborative in its work and frequently partners with foreign research institutes and researchers on initiatives, projects, and workshops. Designed by Zaha Hadid, KAPSARC

opened its new Research Complex in 2017 with a conference center and a research library as well as other research facilities.

5. KING ABDULLAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- **Location**: Thuwal, 23955-6900.
- **Operating hours**: Sunday-Thursday.
- **What to bring**: State-issued photo ID and a letter of introduction, if you have one.
- **Contact details**: Email and telephone numbers not listed on the KAUST website.
- **Website**: https://www.kaust.edu.sa
- **Resources & Notes**:

Founded in 2009 as the first mixed-gender university campus in Saudi Arabia. KAUST requires a university affiliation for anything other than guided campus visits/tours, which themselves require prior online registration on the KAUST website.

6. KING SALMAN CENTRAL LIBRARY, KING SAUD UNIVERSITY

- **Location**: King Saud University, Riyadh, 12372.
- **Operating hours**: Sunday-Thursday, 8 am – 9 pm
- **What to bring**: State-issued photo ID and a letter of introduction, if you have one.
- **Contact details**: +966 11 467 6148
- **Website**: https://ksu.edu.sa
- **Resources & Notes**:

King Saud University is a public university based in Riyadh and established in 1957. The university campus is home to the King Salman Central Library with government publications, press clippings, and audio-visual and electronic media collections in addition to books and periodicals.

7. OTHER RESEARCH RESOURCES

The National Museum in Riyadh is located within the King Abdulaziz Historical Center and is well worth a visit both to view its collections and to tour the heritage sites located nearby, which provide historical context and insight into pre-oil Riyadh. These include the Murabba Palace and Masmak Fort, as well as (further away) the historical and heritage site of Ad Diriyah on the northwest outskirt of Riyadh.

In Dhahran, in the Eastern Province, the King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture encompasses a library with more than 500,000 volumes in Arabic and English.

Family-based conglomerates contain significant archival holdings which are not open to general researchers, but it is worth enquiring about access to these and other private collections of papers and documents which may be granted if a connection is made.