



SHAPING THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION

The AIEA 2026 Award for Presidential Leadership in Internationalization

The Award for Presidential Leadership in Internationalization recognizes the pivotal role that college and university presidents play in advancing global engagement within higher education. Internationalization does not happen by accident. It requires presidential leadership - leaders who set vision, align resources, and champion global engagement as central to the mission of their institutions.

This award honors presidents who demonstrate exceptional leadership in comprehensive internationalization - across teaching and learning, research, partnerships, access, and campus culture. It also places strong emphasis on global-minded leadership at the individual level, recognizing presidents who model global engagement through their values, decisions, and actions, especially in moments of complexity and crisis.

It is in that spirit that we are honored to recognize the **2026 recipient of the Award for Presidential Leadership in Internationalization: President Fadlo R. Khuri**, president of the American University of Beirut.

Since assuming the presidency in 2015, President Khuri has led AUB with clarity of purpose and an unwavering commitment to global engagement, even amid profound national, regional, and global challenges. Under his leadership, internationalization at AUB is not an abstract ideal. It is a lived, institutional practice grounded in access, service, and global responsibility.

One of the most powerful expressions of this leadership has been AUB's sustained response to displacement and refugee crises. As conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, Gaza, and across the region have forced millions from their homes, AUB - under President Khuri's leadership - has expanded access to education, medical care, and humanitarian support for displaced and refugee populations. The university has welcomed refugee students to campus, significantly expanded financial aid, and mobilized its academic, medical, and community resources to serve those most affected by conflict and instability.

President Khuri has consistently framed this work not as charity, but as mission, affirming higher education's responsibility to serve society locally, regionally, and globally. This commitment is reflected in transformative scholarship programs, globally engaged research, international partnerships, and curricula designed to prepare students to lead ethically in an interconnected world.

Equally important, President Khuri's leadership demonstrates what global-minded presidential



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leadership looks like in practice. In moments of crisis, he has reaffirmed the role of universities as anchors of stability, inclusion, and moral clarity. His leadership has strengthened AUB's global mission while deepening its service to the communities it exists to serve.

Through his vision, resolve, and commitment to internationalization as both institutional strategy and moral responsibility, President Khuri exemplifies the values this award seeks to recognize.

AIEA congratulates President Fadlo R. Khurias on receiving this year's Award for Presidential Leadership in Internationalization.