GLOBAL NETWORK FOR ADVANCED MANAGEMENT

The American University in Cairo
Onsi Sawiris School of Business

GNAM Alumni Module

Module: Family Businesses and Startups as Economic Launchpads: Governance, Succession, and Entrepreneurial Growth in Egypt

Dates: 14–18 January 2027

Location: Cairo, Egypt

Fee: $950 (US dollars)

Application deadline: 20 November 2026

Application form link: https://forms.gle/MLkFmsuQxJWQ2DBUA

Description

Egypt's economy has long been powered by two engines running side by side: multigenerational family businesses that anchor entire industries, and a fast-rising startup scene that has produced some of Africa's most celebrated ventures. This five-day experiential program, hosted at the heart of Cairo, explores where these two worlds interact, compete, and increasingly collaborate.

The course is built around a live consulting role play: on Day 1, executives from a leading Egyptian family business and a high-growth startup brief participants on real challenges their companies currently face. Acting as consulting teams — split between the two companies — participants develop recommendations through mentored group work, visit a prominent family enterprise to see multigenerational business leadership first-hand, and present their solutions to a judging panel drawn from both briefing companies.

A full course overview is provided on the following pages…

The American University in Cairo

Onsi Sawiris School of Business

GNAM Alumni Week | Global Network for Advanced Management

Family Businesses and Startups as Economic Launchpads

Governance, Succession, and Entrepreneurial Growth in Egypt

January 14–18, 2027 | Cairo, Egypt

Program Overview

Egypt's economy has long been powered by two engines running side by side: multigenerational family businesses that anchor entire industries, and a fast-rising startup scene that has produced some of Africa's most celebrated ventures. This five-day experiential program, hosted at the heart of Cairo, explores where these two worlds interact, compete, and increasingly collaborate.

The course is built around a live consulting role play: on Day 1, executives from a leading Egyptian family business and a high-growth startup brief participants on real challenges their companies currently face. Acting as consulting teams — split between the two companies — participants develop recommendations through mentored group work, visit a prominent family enterprise to see multigenerational business leadership first-hand, and present their solutions to a judging panel drawn from both briefing companies.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the week, participants will be able to:

- Assess Egypt's legal, regulatory, and macroeconomic landscape as it shapes family firms and new ventures.
- Evaluate governance structures, succession plans, and leadership models suited to family-owned enterprises in emerging markets.
- Map Egypt's entrepreneurial ecosystem — founders, funders, incubators, and policy actors — and its links to established family capital.
- Analyze the tension between heritage and innovation, and how culture enables or resists disruption.
- Act as consultants on a live challenge — diagnosing a real problem faced by a family business or a startup and defending actionable recommendations before company judges.

Program Format

Day 1 — Thursday, January 14: The Landscape & Challenge Briefings

Session 1: Welcome & Orientation (9:30–11:00) — program overview; Egypt and MENA as emerging markets; introduction to the consulting challenge format

Session 2: Legal & Economic Landscape (11:15–12:45) — macroeconomic outlook; applicable laws and regulations, reforms, constraints, challenges, and opportunities.

Lunch (12:45-1:20)

Session 3: State of Play (1:30–3:00) — the status of family businesses and startups in Egypt and MENA; contribution to GDP and employment; survival across generations

Session 4: Consulting Challenge Briefings (3:15–5:15) — executives from a leading family business and a high-growth startup present live challenges on campus; consulting teams are formed and split between the two companies

Day 2 — Friday, January 15: Governance, Succession & Leadership

Session 1: Family Business Governance (9:30–11:00) — boards, family councils, constitutions; ownership vs. management; minority and non-family stakeholders

Session 2: Succession Planning (11:15–12:45) — preparing the next generation; letting go by the founder; successions — the smooth and the stormy.

Lunch and Break (12:45-2:00)

Session 3: Leadership Models (2:00–3:30) — Founder-centric, professional, and hybrid models; leading across generations

Group Work I (3:45–5:45) — consulting teams frame the problem and build their workplan, with faculty mentors circulating for feedback

Day 3 — Saturday, January 16: Ecosystem, Heritage & Disruption

Session 1: Egypt's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (9:30–11:00) — founders, venture capital, accelerators, and policy; fintech and beyond; family capital backing new ventures

Session 2: Heritage vs. Innovation (11:15–12:45) — renewing brands; corporate venturing and family offices; build, buy, or partner

Lunch (12:45-1:20)

Session 3: Culture & Disruption (1:30–3:00) — trust, informality, and risk appetite; generational and digital divides; when tradition is an asset and when it is a liability

Group Work II (3:15–5:15) — consulting teams finalize their analysis and recommendations under faculty mentorship

Day 4 — Sunday, January 17: Family Business Company Visit & Final Presentations

Morning: Company Visit (9:00–12:00) — site visit to a family enterprise — dialogue with executives on multigenerational governance, diversification, and leadership across a global business group

Afternoon: Final Presentations (1:30–4:30) — team presentations to a judging panel of executives from the two Day 1 briefing companies; feedback and discussion

Closing (4:30–5:30): — comparative reflections — what family businesses and startups can learn from each other.

Day 5 — Monday, January 18: Cultural Excursion

Full day: — guided excursion to The Great Pyramids and The Grand Egyptian Museum, — followed by a farewell networking gathering by the Nile.

Experiential Elements

- Consulting Role Play: teams act as consultants to one of two companies that brief live challenges on Day 1, presenting recommendations to judges from both companies on Day 4.
- Company Visit: a family enterprise, with direct executive access to one of Egypt's most prominent multigenerational business families.
- Mentored Group Work: dedicated two-hour team sessions closing Days 2 and 3, with faculty mentors providing feedback.
- Cultural Immersion: site visits and informal networking linking culture, heritage, and business practice.

Who Should Attend

The program is designed for MBA alumni (full time or Executive/part-time) of the Onsi Sawiris School of Business and of fellow schools across the Global Network for Advanced Management — particularly those leading, joining, advising, investing in, and engaging with family enterprises and startups.

Program Fees

The program fee is **USD 950** per participant and includes all academic sessions and materials, meals provided throughout the program, cultural excursions included in the program, welcome and farewell dinners.

Application Deadline

The deadline to submit the online application is November 20, 2026. Applicants will be notified of the admission decision by December 1, 2026.

Course Outcomes

- A team consulting presentation addressing a real challenge from an Egyptian family business or startup, judged by company executives.
- A comparative reflection connecting family-business resilience with startup agility.
- Certificate of participation and networking opportunities with business leaders and GNAM peers.

Course Faculty Lead

Ahmed Abdel-Meguid, Professor of Accounting, Youssef Nabih Department of Accounting
Onsi Sawiris School of Business - The American University in Cairo

Ahmed Abdel-Meguid is a professor of accounting and the CO-OP faculty mentor at Onsi Sawiris School of Business – The American University in Cairo (AUC). He previously served as the Associate Provost for Enrollment Management of AUC. At the school level he was the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Administration, Chair of the Youssef Nabih Department of Accounting, and the Director of the MBA Programs. Ahmed's research focuses on Auditing, Audit Quality, Auditor's Industry Specialization, Corporate Governance, and Earnings Quality. Ahmed holds a Master of Science in Accounting and a Ph.D. in Business administration (accounting) from Syracuse University (USA). He is also a Certified Public Accountant certificate holder (CPA - Not in public Practice).

Contact

For more information, please contact **Farida Mahgoub**, from the Office of Internationalization and Partnerships, Onsi Sawiris School of Business - The American University in Cairo: farida_yehia@aucegypt.edu