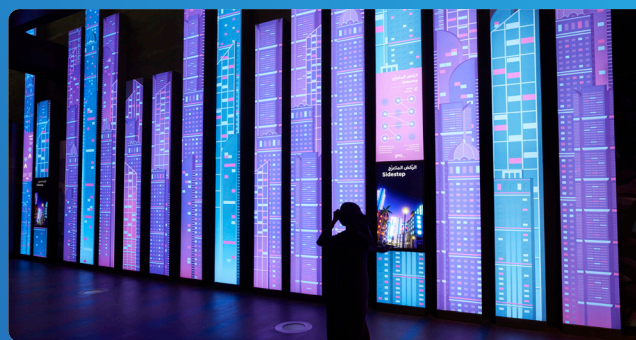


# Discovering physical literacy in Qatar



## Background

In 2017, IPLA member [Trevor Smith](#) was invited to meet with representatives of the Qatar Museum Authority to create concepts for an interactive gallery within the 321 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum, which was under construction.

A concept was agreed and commissioned, and the museum opened its doors in April 2022 with a unique ACTIVATION ZONE gallery which was created on the principles of physical literacy.

With the gallery came an activation programme which launched the concept of physical literacy across Qatar – to schools, ministries, health professionals and coaches.

## The project

The concept of the gallery was to create a space where all visitors (even those who did not have a very positive relationship with sport or physical activity) could understand and engage with the idea of physical literacy – the idea that we are not all going to be sporting heroes or champions, but that we can all find meaning and joy from being active and choosing an active lifestyle.

Through the design and creation of 18 digital and mechanical challenges, visitors were invited to explore their own personal physical literacy. Each challenge focussed on a particular set of attributes in a fun and non-threatening way, which allowed visitors to build a personal profile by recording their scores on a wristband fitted with an RFID chip.

This profile showed each individual how their performances ranked against each other (not against other visitors) to identify their strongest physical literacy components. These were grouped into Fortitude (endurance and concentration), Vitality (strength and power), Quickness (speed and reaction), Control (balance, coordination), and Collaboration (teamwork).

At the end of their time in the gallery, visitors are able to view their personal profile and received suggestions of sports and activities which they might enjoy, based on their ranking of attributes and their scores comparative to other users of the same age and gender.

The final step in the experience was to offer visitors the option to download an App before leaving the gallery which would connect them to the places and people across Qatar that could offer them those (and many other) activities.

In this way, the objective was to celebrate everybody's current physical literacy, match it to activities which might suit and then help people find their way to opportunities to engage.



## The project and beyond

In parallel to the physical gallery experience, Trevor also created a range of engagement programmes which were designed to introduce the concept of physical literacy to schools, sports organisations and the wider community.

In June 2022, as Qatar was at the height of its build-up for FIFA 2022, the International Physical Literacy Association supported the delivery of the country's first Physical Literacy conference.

Attended by representatives from UNESCO, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health, Qatar Olympic Committee, schools, sports federations and private coaches, the two-day event marked the start of Qatar's own physical literacy journey – a journey that is planned to progress further in 2024 during the build-up to the Paris Olympic Games and as Qatar makes preparation to host the Asian Games in 2030.



Creating healthy and active citizens



## Impact

- From its early days of opening, it was clear that the gallery was a popular place to be. Visitors made frequent return visits to complete all 18 challenges or to try to improve scores.
- Families began to make weekly visits together to battle out their own private competitions and individuals reported that the gallery and its concept had literally changed their lives.
- For some, this was the only physical activity that had ever appealed to them, and the museum received countless reports of weight loss and improved emotional health as a result.
- Whilst the education and outreach programmes have yet to become fully established (FIFA 2022 placed immense pressure on the country's resources and capacity) these are to be revived in 2024 and physical literacy will once again become a key feature of teacher and coach education.
- Plans to hold a second conference in 2024 are under discussion, with a view to extending this to the wider Gulf or Middle East.
- Physical literacy is a growing concept in Bahrain, Iran and Egypt as well as Qatar and there is a high level of motivation to create a culturally inclusive physical literacy movement across the region.

## Find out more

The making of the museum



Qatar creates

