

Iberdrola and Qatar sign agreement to strengthen their strategic alliance in innovation

- They will address technological challenges related to innovation and digitalisation in smart grids, renewable energy integration and energy efficiency.
- Ignacio Sánchez Galán, at an event organised by CEOE at which the new alliance with the emirate was sealed, highlighted Iberdrola's role as a driving force for the international opening of small and medium-sized companies.

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Iberdrola and the Qatar Investment Promotion Agency (IPA Qatar) are joining forces to promote the energy company's leading innovation centre, with the aim of advancing the digitalisation of Qatar's electricity sector. The agreement will enable the Spanish company to expand its Research, Development and Innovation (R&D&I) activities through its [Iberdrola Innovation Middle East](#) centre, based in Doha.

The new collaboration will contribute to enhancing innovative solutions and products in the public and private sectors. The centre, currently located in the Qatar Science and Technology Park, will focus on technological challenges related to innovation and digitalisation in smart grids, renewable energy integration and energy efficiency. The Qatari agency's contribution will be key to accelerating the projects of the innovation platform located in the country's capital.

The platform will focus on aligning Iberdrola's R&D&I activities with the needs of Qatari industry and will cooperate with companies and training centres to boost local talent. It will do so through skills development and training programmes and will share intellectual property rights with local educational and industrial institutions.

Ignacio Galán, who reaffirmed this alliance at a business meeting organised by the CEOE (Spanish Confederation of Business Organisations), said that "Iberdrola has been and will continue to be an accelerator for the expansion of small companies in the world". The Iberdrola Chairman added that Iberdrola's experience in Qatar for almost 20 years is the best testimony to the opportunities in the country. "Just today we have signed an expansion agreement here, consolidating a centre that is already a world reference in smart grids, renewable energy integration and energy efficiency, and undoubtedly the leading centre in the Middle East in its field," he said.

The Qatar Investment Promotion Agency oversees activities under the Invest Qatar brand and acts as the country's umbrella organisation for attracting foreign investment. Through its close coordination with Qatari licensing platforms, it helps companies advance their ambitions and achieve long-term success by providing the necessary support, advice and expertise.

IPA Qatar aims to showcase the emirate as an exceptional investment destination, connecting international investors with business opportunities, while advancing the country's economic development and diversification objectives across all sectors and geographies.

[Iberdrola and Qatar, a strategic alliance](#)

Iberdrola has become a strategic partner of Qatar in recent years, collaborating in the construction of a knowledge-based economy and developing solutions for a sustainable future in that country for more than two decades.

Iberdrola's leadership in digitalisation and renewable energies, key elements in the transformation of the energy sector towards electrification and decarbonisation, has allowed it to take advantage of cooperation opportunities with the Qatari government since 2005, a country determined to diversify its economy, away from hydrocarbons.

The collaboration between Iberdrola and Qatar was consolidated in 2011, when the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) became Iberdrola's main shareholder. Since then, the Spanish company has always grown with Qatar's support for its business model, investing in renewable energy, smart grids, storage and smart solutions for our customers.

This strategic alliance has enabled the company to increase its size sixfold, making it the largest company on the Spanish stock exchange, with a market capitalisation of around 70 billion euros, the largest electricity company in Europe, and one of the four largest in the world.

Stimulating R&D&I growth

As a result of this close collaboration, in 2016 Iberdrola decided to create Iberdrola Innovation Middle East, from where it develops solutions based on cutting-edge digital technology for three essential areas of the global energy sector: renewable energy integration, smart grids and solutions for end-user customers. Qatar has an excellent location between Europe and Asia and offers great opportunities to attract global talent and partner with world-class universities and research centres.

At Iberdrola Innovation Middle East, machine learning algorithms and visualisation software have been designed to drastically improve the operations and maintenance of wind turbines at Iberdrola's wind farms around the world. Only a company like Iberdrola, with close to 20,000 MW of installed onshore wind farms, can tackle this type of project, using the data it continuously collects from more than 7,000 turbines around the world.

For offshore wind projects, the centre conducts system stability studies to ensure that offshore installations can safely evacuate their output to the transmission grid. On the customer side, technologies based on cloud computing have been developed to enable the user to control electric vehicles, heat pumps, water heaters and solar panels, and thus, not be a passive but an active player, who can contribute to making the grid and system more manageable and contribute to the goal of net-zero emissions.

The secret of the Spanish company's success lies in combining traditional skills, such as power systems engineering and energy management, with IT skills, such as data analysis and software development. Iberdrola has recruited graduates from Qatar's universities, forming a great team combining local recruitment with international talent from Iberdrola and other countries. Joint development with leading partners is the other key aspect of this centre, which has cooperation agreements and several research projects with three Qatari universities: HBKU, Texas A&M and Qatar University; as well as a collaborative project with Qatar's utility company, Kahramaa, in different fields such as smart metering, electric vehicles and energy efficiency in schools.