



Noor Riyadh FAQs

- Noor Riyadh

What is Noor Riyadh?

Noor Riyadh is the largest light art festival in the world. Noor Riyadh is a citywide annual festival of light and art which launched in March 2021. Noor Riyadh is one of the most exciting and ambitious light art festival in the world, combining the highest quality of light artworks from leading international and Saudi artists across the largest city footprint of any light art festival worldwide.

Noor Riyadh is part of Riyadh Art whose mission is to transform the city into a gallery without walls, bringing art to residential neighborhoods, parks, public areas, metro and bus stations, bridges and pedestrian pathways, city entrances and tourist destinations.

Noor Riyadh Festival is one of the projects of the Riyadh Art Program, which aims to transform the capital into a gallery without walls.

When and where is Noor Riyadh 2023 taking place?

The citywide installations will illuminate Riyadh from November 30 – December 16, 2023, across five locations. The Noor Riyadh Festival's theme for 2023 is *The Bright Side of the Desert Moon*.

The exhibition *Refracted Identities, Shared Futures* will open on November 30, 2023 and run until March 2, 2024, and will be held at the Riyadh Art space in JAX District.

What is Noor Riyadh 2023 comprised of?

Noor Riyadh's vibrant program includes a number of selected public art installations across Riyadh city; a landmark exhibition; and a diverse program of talks, workshops and special activities.

The 2023 edition of the Noor Riyadh Festival will feature large scale public installations, projections and interventions across 5 key locations in the city of Riyadh, and an exhibition of light entitled *Refracted Identities, Shared Futures*, all by more than 100 artists (more than 35 from Saudi Arabia) from 35 countries. Artworks will be accompanied by a diverse program of over 500 community engagement programs including tours, talks, workshops, family activities, film and music.

Who is Noor Riyadh for?

Noor Riyadh is for everyone. There is something for residents and visitors of all generations. Explore the program at NoorRiyadh.sa

Why choose a festival of light?

Light is a universally appreciated medium, which is incredibly moving and engaging. Accessibility stands at the core of Noor Riyadh and its main purpose is to reach the widest audience possible, going beyond traditional art audiences to the wider public. The Festival aims to remove, reduce, or overcome physical, cultural, social, financial, intellectual, psychological and emotional barriers to public participation and engagement.

What is the annual theme?

Each year Noor Riyadh artists and curators respond to an annual theme. The 2021 theme, 'Under One Sky', alluded to the universal human impulse to gather around light, to look into the flames of a campfire and to gaze at the stars. While the theme in its English translation is instantly relatable to an international audience, the words in Arabic literally mean 'we gather under one sky.' This idea of togetherness becomes particularly resonant in light of the global pandemic.



Noor Riyadh's 2022 theme was 'We Dream of New Horizons', responding to a motif that is both literal and metaphorical in meaning. It alludes to the distant glow of sunrise or sunset and the shining light of our dreams, and inherent in the phrase is a sense of hopefulness for the future. Its connotations are positive, optimistic and reflective of a confidence in renewal and transformation. Through a sense of wonder, the artists will explore the use of illumination, luminosity and their own encounters with materials as staging relations to otherness and hope in the form of light.

Noor Riyadh's 2023 theme is *The Bright Side of the Desert Moon*.

- Artists

Are Saudi artists included in Noor Riyadh 2023?

There is a great representation of Saudi artists across Noor Riyadh, with over 35 artists hailing from Saudi Arabia. Noor Riyadh is an important international platform for promoting the city's and the Kingdom's creative communities.

- Artwork commissions

What are the selection criteria for new commissions?

All artworks have been selected by the curators in collaboration with the Festival's artistic direction.

- Curation

What was the process for selecting curators?

Noor Riyadh's curators were selected through a competitive process that ensured a balance between international and local representation.

The curatorial team of Noor Riyadh 2023 is composed of Jérôme Sans as Lead Curator, Pedro Alonzo, Fahad Bin Naif and Alaa Tarabzouni as Curators.

For the Noor Riyadh 2023 Exhibition, Neville Wakefield will be Lead Curator and Maya Al Athel as Curator.

- Heritage

What impact will Noor Riyadh have on Riyadh's heritage?

Riyadh is home to some of Saudi Arabia's most extraordinary sites of natural and historical beauty. Noor Riyadh will take place across multiple locations in the city and extreme care will be taken to ensure the conservation and preservation of each and any historical site included in the program.

- Legacy

How will Noor Riyadh impact the lives of Riyadh's citizens?

Inclusivity is one of Noor Riyadh's key objectives and the programming has been designed and developed to consider all demographics. Noor Riyadh offers experiences for children, public talks, and women-only workshops to guarantee that there are opportunities for all to enjoy and benefit from Noor Riyadh.

Noor Riyadh is one of the 2 annual events and 10 projects under the Riyadh Art program which is an integral part of the transformation of the capital into one of the world's most livable, environmentally friendly and sustainable cities, in line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030 goals.



How will the program leave a lasting legacy in the city of Riyadh?

Through diverse and inspiring community outreach programs that include talks, tours, workshops and volunteering opportunities for residents and visitors, Noor Riyadh will have a positive impact on local communities and provide young audiences with increased opportunities to enter the creative industry and gain professional experience.

How does the program interact with arts education in Saudi Arabia?

Noor Riyadh, under Riyadh Art, compliments the initiatives led by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture to facilitate an increased inclusion of arts education within the national curriculum. Through virtual school visits, teacher and student packs, volunteer programs and other initiatives, Noor Riyadh aims to affect an increased interest in the arts and creativity amongst children and youth.