Our People

Our goal is to attract, develop and retain world-class talent and provide the resources for our people to realise their full potential.

ADIA’s people are as diverse and international as our business, with more than 60 nationalities working together to create a collaborative environment that embodies our cultural values.

We strive to attract, develop and retain world-class talent, and to enable our people to realise their full potential. We achieve this by committing to employees’ development, training and career progression. ADIA seeks to create a fully rounded work environment where committed people can build rewarding careers while contributing to ADIA’s continued long-term success. We place a particular emphasis on the development and training of UAE Nationals, many of whom currently, or will go on to, hold prominent roles within ADIA and in the UAE.

Our People

ADIA employees by nationality

1 UAE 26%
2 Europe 29%
3 Asia/Pacific 23%
4 Americas 12%
5 Middle East/Africa 7%
6 Australasia 3%

Culture

At ADIA, we define culture as a combination of behaviours and values that enable us to fulfil our mission in an optimal and sustainable way. We are proud that ADIA’s cultural values – prudent innovation, effective collaboration and disciplined execution – are becoming a way of life and delivering tangible benefits for our people and for ADIA as a whole.

Our cultural values are not merely words; they are embedded in the ways in which we think and behave, how we organise ourselves, recruit new talent, and develop and reward employees. At ADIA, we are committed to promoting collaboration within and between departments. People are encouraged to share their perspectives and insights informally, and through targeted initiatives. These include regular forums, which bring together our senior investment managers for debates on investment-related themes and to identify investment opportunities that might otherwise go unnoticed.

We conduct a regular survey of employees that measures progress being made on these fronts and identifies areas for improvement.

Recruitment

We believe that ADIA’s broad spectrum of nationalities is one of our core strengths, ensuring a breadth of knowledge, expertise and perspectives is represented in our decision-making processes. We are a world-class employer, and our priorities are to attract and retain the best international and local talent. We achieve this by seeking high-performing individuals in specialised fields, while also identifying top UAE National recruits with the skills and attributes that will underpin ADIA’s continued success. Our structured recruitment process is designed to assess candidates’ experience, technical skills and behaviours while providing them with a thorough and comprehensive understanding of ADIA’s culture, work environment, and life in Abu Dhabi. During 2016, we continued to support ADIA’s long-term objectives with a focus on enhancing our active and internal investment capabilities through a comprehensive recruitment effort. We believe that ADIA’s broad spectrum of nationalities is one of our core strengths.

Our targeted approach to recruitment, coupled with career development opportunities, contributes to high employee engagement and low annual turnover of less than 5% on average.
Developing our People

In an investment landscape that is constantly evolving and increasing in complexity, it is essential that our people continually maintain and update the skills they need to perform at the highest level.

Our approach to talent and performance management ensures that employees clearly understand the goals and behaviours that constitute success and how their individual objectives align with ADIA’s high-level goals and culture. Our annual review process encourages managers to take time to discuss and review the performance of every employee, while identifying ways to develop their strengths and ensure that ADIA continues to grow its leadership and technical capabilities for the future.

ADIA actively supports its employees in their professional and personal development by offering a wide range of targeted development programmes. The combination of classroom training and on-the-job development contributes substantially to employee growth and success. ADIA is proud to employ the highest number of CFA Charterholders of any organisation in the Middle East.

Our emphasis on investment training is complemented by other challenging and rewarding developmental opportunities, with a strong focus on fostering collaboration and innovation.

In addition, we host regular internal events, with speakers from within ADIA as well as corporate leaders and other subject matter experts from respected national and international organisations, aimed at stimulating innovative thinking and ensuring employees stay current on the latest industry trends.

ADIA’s leaders reflect our values and act as examples for others. To assist them in fulfilling this role, we offer management, leadership and executive development programmes, which combine the best of our in-house knowledge and experience with contemporary thinking and practices from around the world. We have relationships with a number of leading academic institutions and learning organisations, whose courses are customised to meet ADIA’s needs, in many important areas of talent development.
Training course statistics

1. Investment & Professional Skills Programmes: 22%
2. Management & Leadership Development: 25%
3. Professional Certification Programmes (e.g., CFA): 6%
4. Personal Development: 42%
5. IT Skills: 5%
Since its formation in 1976, ADIA has maintained a strong commitment to the development of UAE National talent.

Our UAE National Talent
As one of the UAE’s most established and enduring institutions, ADIA is firmly committed to developing local talent. We do this through a range of programmes that aim to identify and nurture outstanding UAE National students to prepare them for future careers with ADIA.

Our Early Preparation Programme works closely with local schools to identify, develop and track young UAE Nationals with strong academic performance and early leadership skills. Short-listed candidates undergo a rigorous selection process, involving interviews as well as language, psychometric and competency skills testing in applying for ADIA’s Scholarship Programme, through which selected candidates are supported to attend leading universities around the world. The goal of these initiatives is to nurture talent through exposure to best educational practices.

Once hired by one of ADIA’s departments, UAE National new joiners are placed in ADIA’s Year One Graduate Programme. This provides them with an immersive introduction to ADIA and an opportunity to develop the key skills and financial knowledge needed to succeed. The programme’s guided study aims to develop financial knowledge and skills while interactive simulations and rotational work assignments across different departments build core analytical skills. Through these activities, new joiners become familiar with all of ADIA’s activities and asset classes. Upon completion of this initial year, graduates return to their designated department where they continue their development through rotational programmes and on-the-job learning. Using this multi-stage approach, ADIA enables UAE National graduates to make a smooth transition into the work environment and provides a strong platform on which to build long-term careers.