

Elite conference series to land in Baghdad

November 2 2011

TED, a decades-old conference series that aims to bring together experts in a variety of fields, will open its inaugural Baghdad gathering in 10 days, organisers said on Wednesday.

The November 12 conference will attempt to highlight Iraqi "creators and inventors" who have persevered through the country's past three decades of war and sanctions.

"We want to make clear that there is happiness, joy, and people living here and inventing despite all the difficult circumstances," said Yahya al-Abdeli, head of TEDxBaghdad, at a news conference in the Iraqi capital.

Abdeli, who said he wants to make TEDxBaghdad an annual fixture, said a \$100,000 (72,500-euro) prize will be given to the best idea at the conference.

The annual Technology, Entertainment, Design (TED) conferences started 27 years ago in California as annual enclaves where elite [thinkers](#) got together to explore life from challenging or unusual perspectives.

Renowned scientists, [political leaders](#), artists, entrepreneurs and musicians have taken to the stage at the technology-focused [gatherings](#) where they are urged to give the "talk of their lives" in 18 minutes.

The non-profit Sapling Foundation began making recordings of talks available online as podcasts in 2006, then began streaming videos free at TED.com the following year to reach a global audience.

TED talks have legions of followers on the Internet and have spread to [television stations](#) around the world.

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