

Diana Abouali currently serves as Director of the Arab American National Museum. She has worked in the higher education and cultural heritage sectors in the United States, Palestine and Jordan. Abouali joined ACCESS in 2019. Born in Toronto, Canada to Palestinian parents, Abouali completed her secondary education in Kuwait. She is a graduate of Wellesley College and received an MA in Middle Eastern Studies (1995) and a PhD in History and Middle Eastern Studies (2004) from Harvard University. From 2004-2012, Abouali taught at Dartmouth College in the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Languages and Literatures—first as lecturer, then as assistant professor—offering courses in Arab-Islamic civilization, gender studies and the social and cultural history of the Middle East.

From 2012-2013, Abouali worked as Head of Research and Collections at the newly established Palestinian Museum in Birzeit, Palestine. Relocating to Amman, Jordan in 2014, she worked as Director of Education, Outreach and Awareness at the Petra National Trust. She was Project Manager at Tiraz: Widad Kawar Home for Arab Dress on an AHRC-ESRC Global Challenges Fund (UK) project, in cooperation with Plymouth University and the Information and Research Center-King Hussein Foundation. In that position and as part of a study of resilience among male Syrian artisan refugees in Jordan, she co-produced a training program and toolkit in social-enterprise creation to preserve cultural heritage. Abouali has organized and delivered cultural heritage education workshops to Syrian children and women in the Azraq and Zaatari refugee camps, and she occasionally teaches college-level courses in the U.S. and Jordan.

Abouali is a member of the general assembly of Taawon-Welfare Association, the largest Palestinian NGO that provides development and humanitarian assistance to Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory and Lebanon. She is also on the board of the Palestinian Museum (Palestine), the Board of Directors of Arte East (NYC) and is a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. She is a member of Leadership Detroit Class XLI.