

# Dubai startup reality show The Equity Room launches its pilot run

[eyeofarabia.com/2018/11/25/the-equity-room-launches-its-pilot-run/](https://eyeofarabia.com/2018/11/25/the-equity-room-launches-its-pilot-run/)

November 25, 2018



## Events & Happenings

By [EYE OF ARABIA](#) | November 25, 2018

16 startups pitched their business ideas to investors, angel investors, and venture capitalists in The Equity Room, the Middle East version of Shark Tank

The Equity Room, a Dubai-based startup reality show, completes its pilot run at Madinat Jumeirah on Wednesday, November 21. 16 startups from various sectors pitched their businesses in front of a live audience, with top investors dubbed as “sharks” serving as main judges.

The big names that served as “sharks” were Raza Jaffar, managing director of Enshaa Holdings Ltd.; Achal Ghai, group managing director of Legacy Emirates Group; Anvita Varshney, co-founder of Dubai Angel Investors; Arif Saiyad, founder and CEO of ASA Ventures; Ganesh Iyer, managing partner of FLC Group; Adriana Usvat, managing partner of FLC Group; Rajiv Dalmia, founder and chairman of Data Direct Group; Ajmal Sharafuddin, co-founder and co-CEO of Clutchi Capital; Kashif Khan, deputy CEO of Abwab Capital; and Vijay Tirathrai, managing director of Techstars Dubai.

“In Shark Tank, the entrepreneurs are at the mercy of the sharks, but in The Equity Room, allowing the audience to rate them is a new and relevant concept. The stage can unnerve

entrepreneurs; however, entrepreneurs shouldn't only generate good ideas but also know how to sell them," said Arif Saiyad, founder and CEO of ASA Ventures. Saiyad was one of the "sharks".

"I was glad to see female entrepreneurs as well as numerous young entrepreneurs, passionate about addressing various market gaps and aiming to solve them. Although UAE has a developed startup industry, it still lags behind compared to the rest of the world. Initiatives like The Equity Room allow the UAE to catch up and provide exposure to the startup community," said Anvita Varshney, co-founder of Dubai Angel Investors and another "shark".

Six of the participating startups secured commitments. In the end, The Equity Room raised funds of approximately 700,000 US dollars.

