You built it.
Now protect it.

You've got assets. Maybe it's a business, a property portfolio, investments across different countries — or all three. You worked for it. You grew it. And somewhere in the back of your mind, there's a quiet question you keep pushing off:

> **"If something happens — or when things change — where does all of this actually go?"**

The good news? There's a structure built exactly for this moment. One that keeps you in control, keeps your wealth intact, and makes sure the right people benefit — on your terms, not anyone else's.

That's what a DIFC Foundation does. And the difference it makes is clear:

NO STRUCTURE IN PLACE	DIFC FOUNDATION IN PLACE
Assets exposed. Courts decide. Multiple jurisdictions clash. The people you wanted to protect end up in legal limbo.	Your rules govern everything. Protected, private, and built to run across generations — exactly the way you intended.

So what actually is a DIFC Foundation?

Think of it as a separate legal person — like a company, but it has no shareholders and exists purely to hold and protect assets on behalf of the people you care about.

Your friend who took one law class

"Wait, is it like a trust?"

Us, actually explaining it

> *"Kind of — but you keep way more control. And it lives in DIFC, which runs on English common law. So it's globally recognised and legally solid."*

0%	1+	∞
CAPITAL GAINS TAX	MINIMUM FOUNDERS	CAN EXIST FOREVER

Your assets are ring-fenced — creditors can't just come take them	**Protected**
Who benefits from it? Not public info. Full privacy.	**Private**
No shareholders, no equity splits, no one holding shares over your head	**Clean**
Runs on English common law — the same system used in the UK, Singapore, Hong Kong	**Globally legit**
No forced heirship. Your assets go exactly where you say they go.	**Your rules**
No personal income tax, no capital gains tax, no withholding tax	**Tax-smart**

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Meet the crew

Every foundation has four roles. Think of it like a well-run group chat — everyone has a function, and the rules are clear from the start.

The Founder

You. The one who builds it. You set the purpose, pick the council, and can keep reserved powers. Minimum age: 18. Can even be a company.

The Council

The board of directors, basically. They manage the assets and make distribution decisions. The founder can sit on it too — staying in the loop without legally owning anything.

The Beneficiaries

The people (or causes) the foundation serves. Could be your kids, a class of descendants, or a charity. You set the conditions — age, milestones, life events.

The Guardian

Optional (unless it's purely charitable — then mandatory). They watch the council and make sure your original wishes are being followed. A trusted advisor or family member.

> The clever bit: the founder keeps influence without legal ownership. You're not the owner of the assets — the foundation is. But your fingerprints are all over the rules.

The two documents that run everything

There are just two documents that matter — and each has a very clear job.

The Charter — "Who we are"

→ The foundation's name and address
→ Its purpose (charitable, private, or both)
→ The big-picture framework
→ Filed with DIFC — it's official

The By-Laws — "How we operate"

→ Who gets what, when, and why
→ Succession triggers and milestones
→ Council governance procedures
→ The founder's specific wishes

You, thinking about it

"So the Charter is the what and the By-Laws are the how?"

Exactly right

> *"The Charter is your foundation's identity. The By-Laws are its operating system. Both together = airtight governance."*

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Setting it up is

faster than you think

No physical presence required. No flying to Dubai. The whole thing is online — and it can be live in under two weeks.

1

DAY 1–2

Decide what you actually want

Is this charitable, personal, or both? Who's on your council? Who are your beneficiaries? Pick 3 name options. Also decide: what assets go in (property? investments? business stakes?), what conditions trigger distributions, and whether you need a guardian.

2

DAY 3–10

Your lawyer drafts the docs

Charter + By-Laws get written. Your wishes become legally binding language. The detail in the By-Laws is where your legacy actually lives. A good set of By-Laws answers questions your family hasn't even thought to ask yet — what happens if a beneficiary divorces? If a council member steps down? This is where you future-proof everything.

3

DAY 11–13

Submit online to DIFC

Charter + KYC docs (passport, CV, source of funds) go through the DIFC portal. That's it. No office visit. KYC means: passport copies for all parties, CVs for council members, evidence of source of funds, and beneficiary disclosures. Standard stuff — just have it ready.

4

5–10 BUSINESS DAYS

DIFC reviews your application

The Registrar goes through everything. They might ask a clarifying question. You don't need to be there in person at any point. Most queries are minor — a missing document or a name conflict. If everything's clean from step 3, this usually moves fast.

5

DONE

Certificate of Incorporation — it's live

Your foundation is now a legal entity. Transfer assets in. Open bank accounts. Start operating. Your legacy is protected. From this point: the foundation owns the assets, not you. It can open bank accounts, hold property, invest — all under the rules you wrote in the By-Laws.

The tax stuff * —

actually not scary.

UAE Corporate Tax applies to DIFC Foundations — but the framework gives founders a powerful option. Depending on how your foundation is structured and used, you could pay **zero** corporate tax. Here's how it works.

THE ELECTION

A DIFC Foundation can elect to be treated as an Unincorporated Partnership for UAE Corporate Tax purposes.

This means the foundation becomes **fiscally transparent** — income is no longer taxed at the foundation level. Instead, it is looked through and attributed directly to the founder and beneficiaries according to their own tax status.

Key distinction: By default, a DIFC Foundation is a taxable juridical person subject to standard UAE CT rates — 0% up to AED 375,000 and 9% above. Once the foundation elects fiscal transparency and receives FTA approval, this threshold no longer applies. The foundation itself is no longer the taxable entity.

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HOW INCOME FLOWS — ONCE ELECTED

FOUNDATION	LOOK-THROUGH	BENEFICIARIES
Generates passive income	**Income attributed to members**	**Taxed per their own status**
Investments, real estate, holdings	Foundation pays zero CT	Natural persons — typically nil

Natural persons receiving passive income from a transparent foundation are generally **not subject to UAE CT** — since there is currently no personal income tax in the UAE. For most family wealth foundations, this results in an effective zero-tax outcome across the entire structure.

KEY NUMBERS

Register	0%	9 months	FTA approval
with the Federal Tax Authority (FTA) — required for all DIFC Foundations	CT at foundation level once fiscal transparency is elected and FTA-approved	After year-end to file CT return and annual confirmation of conditions	Election is not automatic — a formal application must be submitted and approved

Your annual obligations to keep the foundation in good standing:

Renew your operating licence every year	Annual
File annual returns with the DIFC Registrar	Annual
Maintain a registered office address within DIFC	Ongoing
File Corporate Tax returns — even if no tax is payable	Annual

The bottom line?

What you've built deserves a structure as strong as the effort that went into building it. A DIFC Foundation is that structure — on your terms, forever.

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*** HEADS UP!**

We're dropping knowledge, not legal advice. Before you act on anything here, loop in a lawyer, tax advisor, or the relevant pro — your situation is unique and deserves expert eyes. Need a referral? We've got you.