

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2025

אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב  
جامعة بن غوريون في النقب  
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev





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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2025

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## From the PRESIDENT



Dear friends of Ben-Gurion University,

As we gather for this year's Board of Governors meeting, we find ourselves again at a moment of contradiction. While our nation, and indeed the world, continues to face unprecedented challenges, BGU has not merely persevered but thrived. It is precisely in these moments of great challenge that our true character emerges. And what has emerged at BGU is nothing short of extraordinary!

In the most difficult year in Israel's history, we have continued our rise in research outputs, growing faster than any university in Israel. Equally impressive, despite the circumstances, we also experienced the fastest growth in student registration. These achievements have culminated in an incredible milestone: a balanced budget without drawing from investment returns. This financial stability enables us to invest significantly in research and teaching infrastructure and, most importantly, in our students.

Perhaps the most dramatic indication of our progress is reflected in international rankings. BGU's position in the Shanghai rankings jumped 200 places, reflecting our enhanced research output, increased international collaborations, and growing global recognition.

The impact of our many research centers, such as the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research, the Azrieli National Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment Research, and Cyber@BGU, to name just a few, is felt worldwide. This past year, we inaugurated yet another groundbreaking initiative – the Klein Institute for Nuclear Science and Engineering, which addresses Israel's critical need for energy diversification and security. As the only academic establishment in Israel specializing in simulation of core physics phenomena in nuclear power systems, BGU is uniquely positioned to lead the initiative that will train the next generation of nuclear engineers and support Israel's transition to energy independence.

The 50th anniversary of the Joyce and Irving Goldman Medical School emphasizes our commitment to bringing the most cutting-edge health care to the Negev. The newly endowed Sagol Medical School for International Health builds upon the groundbreaking approach of MSIH, which

was so dear to many of you. Together, our medical schools remind us that "Generating the Future" is what we have always done, through innovation that addresses real-world needs with compassion and scientific rigor.

BGU stands at a pivotal moment in its history. Our strategic plan "BGU Beyond 50" achieved remarkable success in its core mission of advancing academic excellence. These achievements are particularly significant given today's challenges. We are now embarking on Strategy 2.0, which builds on our successful foundation while embracing an expanded, reimagined vision of the University's role in the Negev.

At present, our impact on the local economy is already close to \$1 billion annually! Imagine what we can achieve with stronger institutional capabilities, clearer strategic focus, and a renewed commitment to Ben-Gurion's vision of a university that transforms the Negev through scientific excellence and social commitment. By embracing this vision, we can leverage our academic excellence not only for increased local impact, but also enhance our own academic output and attract more students.

"Generating the Future" is not merely our theme – it is our lived reality. The challenges ahead are substantial, but BGU's capacity for transformation, combined with our enhanced resources and capabilities, positions us to meet these challenges while advancing toward our goal of global academic leadership.

In the spirit of David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first entrepreneur, we continue to boldly move forward, ensuring that his start-up – the State of Israel – continues to thrive. BGU remains the beacon lighting the way forward, not despite the challenges we face, but because of how we rise to meet them.

With gratitude for your continued support,

Prof. Daniel Chamovitz



From the  
**CHAIRMAN OF  
 THE BOARD OF  
 GOVERNORS**

Dear friends and members of the Board of Governors,

This past year has again been one of ongoing challenges and profound transformations. As the war in Israel continues and we experience upheavals in our own worlds elsewhere, we all feel anxiety and uncertainty about the future. Yet, we must not lose hope – because we have the power to make a difference. The future is in our hands.

A year ago, in the aftermath of the October 7 attacks, the BGU community committed to a path of resilience and renewal. Today, we are more determined than ever to see Ben-Gurion University of the Negev be the center of the south and drive the future of the Negev.

BGU was founded with the unique historic mandate to advance the Negev, and over the past five decades, in striving to fulfill our mission, we have achieved the remarkable on so many fronts. For me personally, there is no better example than this year's celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Faculty of Health Sciences and its pioneering Joyce and Irving Goldman Medical School. I am proud of this legacy honoring my parents and humbled by the critical role we have played in ensuring equitable healthcare for the Negev's diverse population and shaping medical education everywhere. Such achievements define our University and guide us forward.

BGU's involvement in rebuilding the Negev will be comprehensive, strategic, and leverage all our strengths in a concerted effort. The Board of Governors, through the newly established Negev Development Committee, chaired by longtime board member Dr. Esther Luzzatto and guided by Prof. Miki Malul, will play a key role in enabling the University's strategy for the Negev going forward.

We hope that every member of the BGU community – students, researchers, friends, supporters, and partners – will be involved in this concerted effort to extend our impact beyond the campus gates and serve as an engine of growth for all who call the Negev home. I especially urge all our board members to join the Negev Development Committee and become involved.

As always, we rely on the help of our global friends to advance our goals worldwide. Through The Way Forward campaign, our faithful donors have already demonstrated extraordinary generosity that has allowed us to effectively cope with the shock of October 7 and assist affected students and staff. The Halutz Initiative (now in its fourth year) and the Zin Fellows (now in its 12th year), have brought a new generation of leaders into our community, ensuring that our vision for the Negev will endure and evolve.

We have made significant advances in realizing our strategic goals this past year: key buildings on the North Campus are nearing completion, expanding our capacity to educate and inspire our students who will change the world. The Beer-Sheva Innovation District, anchored by the University, is a transformative force in the region's economy, creating new opportunities and strengthening the Negev's role as a hub of technological and social innovation.

I am proud and honored to lead the Board of Governors at this momentous time. I urge all our governors to take an active role in our efforts by joining the Board committees, which provide essential oversight and guidance to the University's administration. Your expertise, insight, and dedication are invaluable assets in our shared mission. As a group, we have many diverse skills and voices. We are smart and have much to add to the "conversation."

I look forward to continuing to work with the University's Executive Committee, our Board of Governors, and our global network of supporters as we continue to generate the future of the Negev together.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lloyd Goldman'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'L'.

Lloyd Goldman



# FIFTY YEARS OF HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP

## THE BEER-SHEVA SPIRIT



"THE BEER-SHEVA EXPERIMENT WAS A BOLD VENTURE. ITS WORK ON PIONEERING TECHNIQUES IN MEDICAL EDUCATION, PRODUCING PHYSICIANS WITH A MORE HUMANISTIC APPROACH TO MEDICINE AND MEDICAL CARE, HAS SERVED AS AN EXAMPLE FOR NUMEROUS SCHOOLS AROUND THE WORLD."

Stephen C. Schoenbaum, Chairman of the IARC, 2005\*

\*In: Dan E. Benor, *Sustaining Change In Medical Education. The Model of the Faculty of Health Sciences*, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

## A MEDICAL SCHOOL OPENS IN THE DESERT

In March 1973, Israel's Council for Higher Education approved the establishment of the country's fourth medical school at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. This initiative was spearheaded by Clalit Health Services, which operates Beer-Sheva's primary hospital, in collaboration with the leadership of the fledgling university (founded in 1969) and Beer-Sheva's mayor, David Tuviyahu.

Prof. Haim Doron, Director-General of Clalit Health Services, and Prof. Moshe Prywes, BGU President and former Vice Dean of the Hebrew University medical school, worked tirelessly to bring the vision to life. Doron and Prywes, who stepped down as president to become the school's first dean, were joined by distinguished professionals: Prof. Asher Segal, a leader in medical education; Prof. Dan Benor, a family physician who introduced an innovative curriculum with early clinical exposure; Prof. Aaron Antonovsky, a world-renowned medical sociologist who championed a holistic patient-centered approach; and Prof. Shraga Segal, who shaped the basic sciences curriculum at the University Center for Health Sciences and Services.

Together, they redefined medical education, pioneering personal interviews as part of the candidate selection process – a practice now standard worldwide – while emphasizing early clinical exposure and the bio-psycho-social model of patient care. This community-focused philosophy, known as the "Beer-Sheva Spirit," alongside

candidate interviews, became a defining characteristic not only of the medical school but of all clinical programs at BGU.

The medical school welcomed its first class of 34 students in 1974. Just a few years later, in 1978, the Leon and Mathilde Recanati School for Community



↑ *The "Teddy Bear Clinic" run by Asran, the FOHS student union, c. 2010*



↑ *Medical students on clinical rounds at Soroka University Medical Center, 2017*



↑ *Historical photo from the Tuviyahu Archive of the Negev*



← *Dr. Simona Bar-Haim of the Dept. of Physiotherapy and Dr. Lior Shmuelof of the Dept. of Cognitive and Brain Sciences at ADI Negev-Nahalat Eran Rehabilitation Village, one of the FOHS' clinical affiliates*

↳ *Department of Nursing, Class of 2011*



Health Professions was established, offering academic degrees in nursing and physiotherapy. Alongside the medical school and the Division of Basic Sciences, these programs formed the Faculty of Health Sciences (FOHS).

### A WHOLE FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

The first medical students graduated in 1981, followed by the first graduates of the Recanati School in 1982. The FOHS rapidly expanded its academic offerings throughout the 1980s and 1990s, introducing programs in epidemiology, public health, medical laboratory sciences, gerontology, emergency medicine, and health systems management. Research excellence followed, leading to the creation of world-renowned research centers such as the PREPARED Center for Emergency Response Research and, most recently, BGU-FOR (Food Systems, One Health & Resilience).

## FIFTY YEARS OF HEALTHCARE TIMELINE

**1973** CHE approves medical school in Beer-Sheva

**1974** Medical school and Center for Health Sciences inaugurated

**1978** Programs combined to create the Faculty of Health Sciences

**1994** Department of Health Policy and Management established

**1969** University of the Negev founded

**1973** Department of Microbiology established

**1978** Leon and Mathilde Recanati School for Community Health Professions established

**1986** FOHS authorized to grant Master's and PhD degrees in Medical Sciences

**1996** Medical school renamed the Joyce and Irving Goldman Medical School

In 1996, the medical school was named the Joyce and Irving Goldman Medical School, and an international advisory committee was established to ensure that excellence and innovation remained its founding principles. In 2000, the Medical School for International Health (MSIH) was launched in partnership with Columbia University. This unique four-year English language MD program integrated global health into the core MD curriculum. However, due to a dire shortage in physicians in Israel, the MSIH admitted its final class in 2023, and transitioned into a four-year MD program for Israeli students, recently named after philanthropist Sami Sagol.

In 2023, the state-of-the-art Field Family Medical Simulation Center opened in the Rachel and Max Javit Medical Simulation Building, offering the most advanced simulation training to both FOHS students and healthcare professionals, including Magen David Adom paramedics. In the wake of October 7, the center became a vital training ground for IDF medics heading into active duty.

### A LEGACY OF WORKING FOR THE NEGEV

The collaboration between Clalit Health Services and BGU was instrumental in transforming Soroka University Medical Center into a premier regional teaching hospital, and the clinical training at BGU's six affiliated hospitals and in community clinics across the Negev, keeps the Beer-Sheva Spirit alive in today's students.

Among its many advancements, the BGU Faculty of Health Sciences has played a pivotal role in reducing regional health disparities. One notable achievement is the significant reduction in infant mortality rates among the Negev's Bedouin population, driven by genetic research and a community-based healthcare approach.

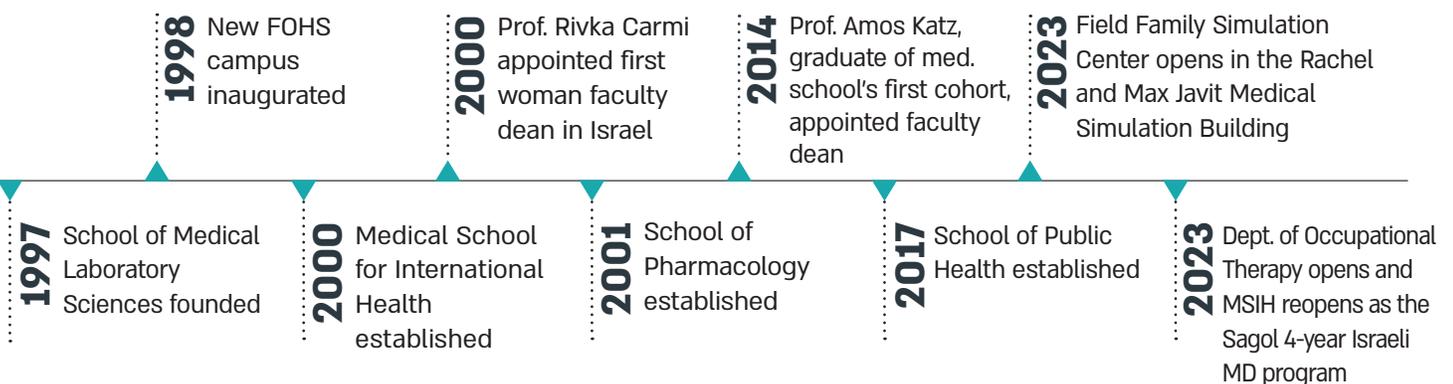
Over the years, the FOHS has remained true to its founding mission – educating healthcare professionals who are not only skilled clinicians but also educators, researchers and community leaders. The Beer-Sheva Spirit shone particularly brightly during the initial months of the Iron Swords War, as FOHS students and faculty played a critical role in treating the mass casualties from the October 7 attack.

### LOOKING FORWARD

As the FOHS marks 50 years of pioneering medical education, research, and healthcare innovation, it remains steadfast in its commitment to training the next generation of medical leaders. Rooted in the Beer-Sheva Spirit, the Faculty continues to push the boundaries of medicine, ensuring that its impact – both in Israel and beyond – remains profound for decades to come.



↑ Physicians' Oath Ceremony of the 12th cohort of the medical school





← Sderot



# A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO THE NEGEV



"We have an historic responsibility to leverage our increasing excellence in research towards rebuilding the Negev better than before."

↓ Prof. Miki Malul



Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) has long been at the forefront of research, innovation, and education, but its mission extends beyond the traditional bounds of academia. As a university dedicated to both excellence and social responsibility, BGU embraces its third mandate: to lead the development of the Negev for the benefit of all its residents.

In the wake of the horrific events of October 7, this commitment has taken on a new urgency. The devastation of the Western Negev presents not just a challenge but an opportunity – an opportunity for the University to leverage its knowledge, expertise, and deep sense of purpose to drive meaningful and lasting transformation.

To achieve a lasting impact, BGU's President Prof. Daniel Chamovitz has sought to align the University's traditional mandate with the concept of a Fifth Wave university

championed by Prof. Michael M. Crow – an institution that directly integrates academic excellence with societal impact. By fostering reciprocal relationships among academia, government, industry, and civil society, BGU can create a self-reinforcing cycle: the more successful its interventions, the more it attracts top-tier researchers and students committed to the Negev's future. This dynamic, in turn, will strengthen BGU's standing as a world-class research university with a unique social mission.

Building on this understanding, BGU has embarked on its most ambitious initiative yet to catalyze the region's renewal. Led by Prof. Miki Malul, former Dean of the Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management, this initiative seeks to harness the University's resources and pioneering spirit, alongside its extensive existing partnerships, to advance the region economically, socially, and culturally. A recent survey\* of perceptions of the



*"When we remove obstacles for students from the periphery, we're not just changing individual lives – we're transforming the entire social and economic landscape of the Negev."*

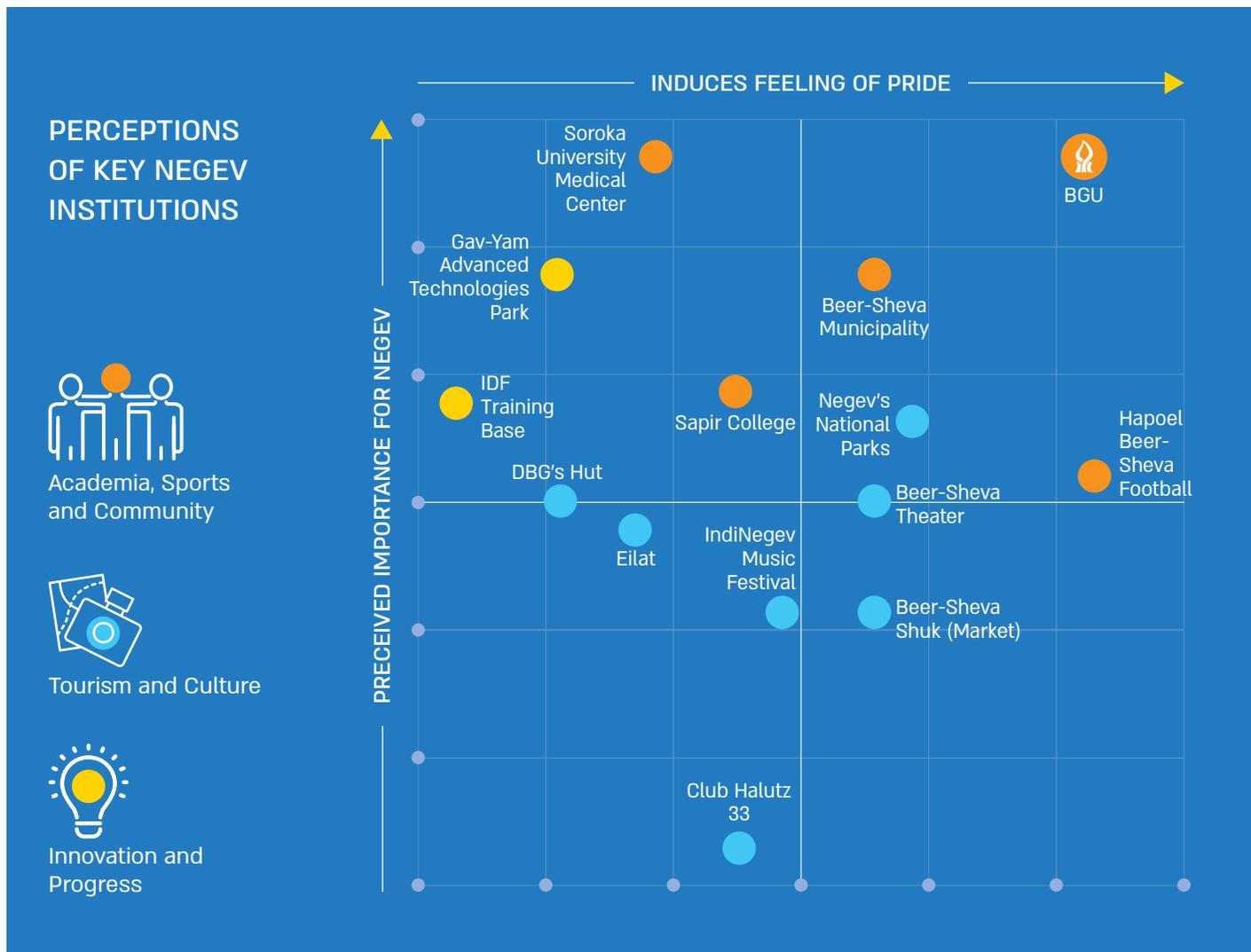
Negev's key institutions placed Ben-Gurion University highest both in terms of its impact and in terms of the pride it instills in Negev residents. "We are gratified that our contribution to the Negev is recognized, but this also brings home the importance of the task ahead. We have an historic responsibility to leverage our increasing excellence in research towards rebuilding the Negev better than before," says President Prof. Chamovitz.

The effort will be collaborative from beginning to end and extend far beyond our campus gates. At the heart of the initiative is the establishment of a social innovation incubator at the University, where academic knowledge can be directly linked to on-the-ground practice by bringing together researchers, students, and local practitioners for mutual learning and collaboration. The incubator will serve as a hub where real-world challenges from across the Negev are brought in, and interdisciplinary teams of students and researchers work together with stakeholders to develop innovative, actionable solutions to these challenges.

Smart cities will be explored in collaboration with the Negev's municipal engineers; education with heads of local education departments; and tourism and wellness with regional stakeholders in those fields. Each department at the University will contribute its unique expertise.

The ultimate goal is to strengthen the capabilities of local professionals while embedding the University in the region's development process. This multi-dimensional approach will not only generate innovative ideas but will help drive sustainable, inclusive growth across the Negev.

The Western Negev, for example, is a vital source of food production for Israel and faces both immediate recovery needs and long-term sustainability challenges. BGU is planning to establish a research center focused on agriculture and water management in the town of Sderot. Prof. Malul explains, "Right now, the challenge is to rehabilitate agriculture in the surrounding region. We have the capabilities – we have outstanding researchers



\*Tack Growth Strategies, February 2025

in agriculture and water with the knowledge to contribute meaningfully. The research center will enable us to both advance our own research and significantly upgrade agriculture in the region. We can help not just its recovery, but advance it far beyond where it was before."

One of the initiative's first areas of impact thus far has been to expand access to higher education for students from peripheral communities. "Many talented young residents of the Negev face significant structural barriers to academic success, from financial hardship to a lack of preparatory resources, and even simple logistics," says Prof. Malul. Through targeted scholarship programs, mentorship initiatives, and expanded outreach – bringing the University to students, rather than bringing students to the University – BGU is creating new pathways for these students to achieve their potential. Prof. Malul explains, "When we remove obstacles for students from

the periphery, we're not just changing individual lives – we're transforming the entire social and economic landscape of the Negev."

"We are now at the outset of what will be a long journey," says Malul, "but the overarching idea is leverage. How we as a university can leverage the Negev's strengths and enable it to realize its potential."

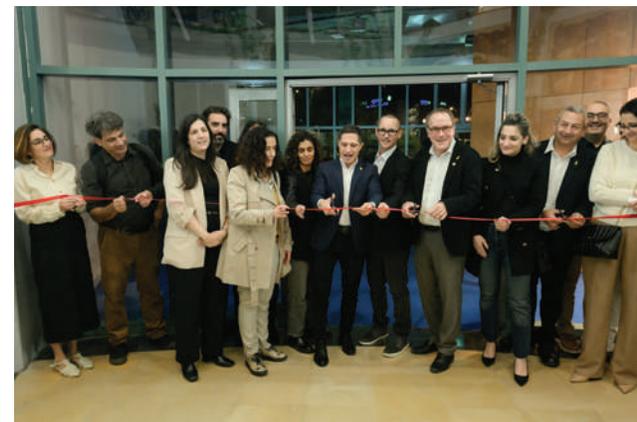
True transformation requires sustained effort, broad collaboration, and unwavering commitment. Yet, there is no mission more vital than ensuring that the Negev thrives – not as a peripheral region, but as the beating heart of Israel. "We will be a beacon for both Israelis and Jews around the world who want to be part of something larger," adds President Chamovitz.

We invite all those who share this vision to join us on this journey, as we shape the future of the Negev together.

# NOTEWORTHY NEWS



# NOTEWORTHY NEWS



↑ *L-R: President Prof. Daniel Chamovitz, Lisa Scheller, Ernest Scheller, Jr., Leo Peretz, and their cousin Uriel at the cornerstone laying ceremony for the Gate of Innovation, September 2024*

→ *Dedication of the NUR Lab on Rager Blvd., January 2025*

↗ *Graduation of the MSIH class of 2024, May*

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Ernest Scheller, Jr., his daughter Lisa, and grandson Leo lay the cornerstone for the **Ernest Scheller, Jr. Gate of Innovation**, the main entrance to the North Campus.

A generous pledge will enable the University to proceed with its plans to build the **Cyndi and Max Mintzberg Cultural and Conference Centre** on the North Campus.

## ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

The **Medical School for International Health**, a prestigious 4-year MD program that reoriented to Israeli students last year, was named for philanthropist **Sami Sagol**.

BGU is expanding its **Aliya to Academia** programs following the success of the yearlong pre-academic program for Russian-speaking immigrants. The **Aliya@BGU Unit**, headed by the Pro-Rector for Education, Prof. Louisa Meshi, will

provide comprehensive support for recent immigrants, as well as new specialized programs for English-speaking olim.

The **NUR (Negev Urban Research) Lab**, a collaboration with the City Science Group at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), was dedicated in the Beer-Sheva Innovation District.

BGU established a new Research Center for **Environmental Humanities**, combining sustainability and environmental studies with the humanities and social sciences.

The **Klein Institute for Nuclear Science and Engineering** was established to contribute solutions to Israel's critical need for energy diversification and security.



# NOTEWORTHY NEWS



← (L-R): Rector Prof. Chaim Hames, with the 2024 Honorary Doctoral Degree recipients Yehudit Ravitz, Prof. Allan Morris Brandt, Katharina von Schnurbein and Prof. Michael M. Crow, and President Prof. Daniel Chamovitz

## PARTNERING FOR THE FUTURE

**BGN Technologies**, BGU's technology transfer company, signed an open-ended Master Sponsored Research Agreement with **Google** to explore mutual academic fields of research. The first joint project will investigate security and trust in the post-quantum internet.

**Microsoft** and BGU are launching a research project aiming to identify privacy leaks in the large language models that power AI as part of Microsoft's Secure Future Initiative.

BGU launched several specialized academic programs in collaboration with the Ministry of Defense and the IDF, including **Galaxia**, a new pre-military program which allows students to earn both a bachelor's and master's degree in physics within four years.

## HONORS BESTOWED

BGU's highest honor, the honorary doctoral degree, was bestowed upon **Prof. Allan Morris Brandt, Prof. Michael M. Crow, Yehudit Ravitz**, and **Katharina von Schnurbein** at the 2024 Board of Governors Meeting in May. The President's Award was given to Nili Margalit and three medical centers in the Negev.

**Prof. Vladimir Zelman** of the University of Southern California received an honorary doctoral degree in a ceremony held in Los Angeles in December.





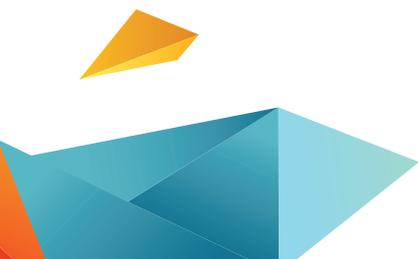
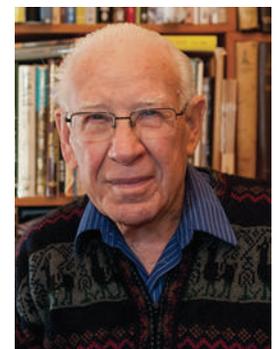
↩ The 2024 Ben-Gurion Award honorees, December 2024

↙ Comedienne Orna Banai with President Chamovitz and Rector Hames at the Ben-Gurion Award ceremony

↓ Aharon Yadlin, z"l

After being postponed last year in the wake of the October 7 attacks, this year's Ben-Gurion Awards were bestowed upon: **Orna Banai, Dovi Frances, ICA in Israel, Osnat Peri, Gideon Shani, Prof. Michal Shapira, the friends of Noa Argamani** and three Negev-based organizations for social and educational change.

BGU named the conference room where the Executive Committee meets and a research scholarship fund for **Aharon Yadlin z"l**, one of the University's founders and a beloved friend.



# NOTEWORTHY NEWS



↑ *Dr. Talia Meital Schwartz-Tayri*

➤ *Prof. Sarab Abu-Rabia Queder receives an honorary doctoral degree from Prof. Alon Chen, President of the Weizmann Institute of Science. Photo: Weizmann Institute of Science*

## EXCELLENCE RECOGNIZED

BGU's undergraduate entrepreneurship programs were ranked 47th globally in the **2024 PitchBook rankings**, with 333 founders who raised over \$9 billion among its graduates.

**Yazamut 360° Entrepreneurship Center** was awarded the 2024 Innovation Award in the education category by INSA, the Israeli Institute for Innovation Assessment.

The Council for Higher Education recognized BGU for excellence in gender equity. The recognition comes with a grant that will be applied to supporting women doctoral students.

**Prof. Sarab Abu-Rabia Queder**, Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, received an honorary Doctoral degree from the Weizmann Institute of Science in recognition of her efforts on behalf of marginalized communities.

BGU President **Prof. Daniel Chamovitz** was honored with the 47th spot on the Jerusalem Post's list of the 50 most influential Jews in 2024 for exemplifying the fusion of scientific excellence with social impact. **Noa Argamani**, the BGU student known as "the face of the hostage crisis" after her capture by Hamas, was also on the list.

Israel21c's "48 remarkable Israelis" Independence Day list includes BGU faculty member **Dr. Talia Meital Schwartz-Tayri**, along with BGU Board member **Sylvan Adams**.

**Dr. Nir Shlezinger** of the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering was awarded the 2024 Krill Prize from the Wolf Foundation. He also won an ERC Starting grant.

**Prof. Itzik Mizrahi** from the Department of Life Sciences and the Goldman Sonnenfeldt School of Sustainability and Climate Change was awarded the prestigious 2024 Bruno Award by the Yad Hanadiv Foundation, which recognizes leading Israeli researchers with the potential for groundbreaking discoveries.

**Dr. Aviad Moreno** of the Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism won a National Jewish Book Award in the Sephardic Culture category for his book *Entwined Homelands, Empowered Diasporas*.

**Prof. Carmi Z. Margalit**, founding Director of the Medical School for International Health, was among the recipients of a Bonei Zion Prize, awarded to olim from English-speaking countries whose achievements serve as a model for others and who have made a transformative impact on Israeli society.

**Prof. Assaf Zaritsky** of the Department of Software and Information Systems Engineering was honored with a 2024 Allen Distinguished Investigator Award in Organelle Communication. The award, granted by The Paul G. Allen Frontiers Group, will fund a \$1.5 million pioneering collaborative interdisciplinary project.

**Prof. Michael Meijler** of the Department of Chemistry was awarded a \$1.2 million Human Frontier Science Program grant for 2024.



↑ *Dr. Aviad Moreno.*  
*Photo: Yehonatan Moreno*



↖ *Dr. Nir Shlezinger (r)*  
*with Rector Prof. Chaim Hames*  
*at the Krill Prize*  
*ceremony, June 2024.*  
*Photo: Yuval Yosef*

← *Prof. Carmi Margalit*  
*and Sylvan Adams*  
*(center) at the Bonei*  
*Zion award ceremony,*  
*Dec. 2024.*  
*Photo: Shachar Azran*

# BGU IN WARTIME

## 116

MEMBERS OF THE  
BGU FAMILY\* HAVE  
BEEN MURDERED OR  
FALLEN IN BATTLE  
SINCE OCTOBER 7



➤ *The University's memorial for Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terrorism.*

➤ *Campus sign welcoming Noa Argamani home*

**Noa Argamani**, the BGU student who was kidnapped into Gaza by Hamas at the Nova Music Festival, was rescued alongside three other hostages on June 8, 2024. Her boyfriend, **Avinatan Or**, a graduate of BGU, remains a hostage in Gaza.

**Alexander (Sasha) Trufanov**, a BGU alumnus, was released in an exchange in February 2025.

During the 2023-24 academic year, dedicated social workers at the **Dean of Students Office** provided close support to 361 students who were directly affected by the October 7 events. These included survivors of the Nova music festival and other parties, students who lost close family members, evacuees, wounded and others. For further details, see page 26. During the current academic year, the Office continues to support over 600 students.

A total of 181 BGU students who served for more than 235 days in the IDF reserves during the 2023-24 academic year received special scholarships in recognition of their contribution while pursuing their academic studies. Each was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship. About 230 additional scholarships will be given to reservists this year, generously donated by BGU supporters in the US and France.



\* Students, faculty, staff, and their first degree relatives, as well as alumni.

# WE AWAIT THE RETURN OF THE HOSTAGES AND REMEMBER THOSE WE HAVE LOST



← Event marking the one year anniversary of the October 7 events

↓ A solemn opening ceremony for the 2024-2025 academic year, Nov. 2024



# 6,754

MEMBERS OF THE BGU COMMUNITY WERE MOBILIZED FOR MILITARY RESERVE DUTY



INCLUDING

# 6,385

STUDENTS



# 369

FACULTY MEMBERS



EACH SERVED AN AVERAGE OF OVER

# 100

 DAYS

This academic year saw increased demand for studies in therapeutic fields: medicine, physical therapy, occupational therapy, psychology, and other behavioral sciences. There was a significant growth in interest in each of these areas, with physical therapy applications up by 68% and occupational therapy by 89%. Graduate studies in these fields experienced similar growth, with a 23% increase in applications to psychology master's programs and a 100% increase in applications for master's programs in physical therapy. Demand for biomedical engineering has also risen by 50%.

The recent upheaval has also intensified interest in regional geopolitics and Israeli society, with sociology & anthropology applications up 114% and interest in Middle Eastern studies up by 73%.

# REPORTS





Prof.  
**CHAIM HAMES**  
RECTOR



### SNIPPETS FROM THE RECTOR'S DIARY (MARCH 2024 - MARCH 2025)

*July 4, 2024*

I am a great believer in the importance of a vibrant academic community that provides opportunities for faculty from across the University to meet, exchange ideas, and learn from each other. Four times a year, we hold the Rector's Forum, where faculty members give talks about their research in a manner accessible to researchers from other fields, and every Wednesday during the semester, I host researchers from different disciplines for lunch. However, I have always wanted to arrange a full day of activities for our faculty community. This year, war notwithstanding, we held the event on the Student Day, when there are no classes.

Around 120 faculty took part in the day which started with round tables for joint study, a talk from former president of the High Court of Justice Elyakim Rubinstein, a Hyde Park session, a panel on AI, and more. All in all, the day was a resounding success, and we are looking forward to our second academic festival next year.

*July 19, 2024*

Today is the last teaching day of this academic year, which began very late because of the horrific events of October 7, 2023 and the ensuing and ongoing war. With some 6,000 students doing reserve military duty on both the southern and northern fronts, the continuous sound of helicopters bringing the wounded to Soroka Medical Center, and the constant worry for the welfare of family and friends, we have somehow managed to complete the

academic year. Much credit must go to the academic and administrative staff who have stepped up and gone well beyond the call of duty to ensure that the students' needs are met without compromising academic standards. It has been enormously difficult for the students as well, and they have risen to the challenge admirably. We have an intense summer semester ahead of us as we replicate classes to allow those students who were unable to study during the regular academic year to catch up.

*September 10, 2024*

Everything is different this year. We normally hold our degree ceremonies in June, but this year, they have been taking place over the past week. Tonight, we had the degree ceremony for our new PhDs. This is always an exciting event, attended by the students, their families, their academic supervisors and the academic leadership of the University. This year, we opened the ceremony by awarding doctoral degrees to the families of three of our students – Ronit Tal Sultan, who was murdered, together



↑ *Open Day on campus, March 2025*



← Noa Argamani and friends on stage. Ben-Gurion Awards, December 2024

↪ Event marking the one year anniversary of the October 7 events



with her partner, in her home on October 7; Gideon Ilani, father of seven, who was killed in action; and Bar Schwartz, who died of an illness. This set the tone for a very special evening.

### November 3, 2024

The first day of the new academic year started with a ceremony commemorating the victims of October 7 and the members of our community who lost their lives. We all hope that this year will be as normal as possible, though we still have thousands of students doing reserve military duty and will have to support them as much as possible.

Much time over the last few months has been devoted to coming up with an outline designed to provide our students with a whole gamut of solutions regarding

coursework and examinations, grades and supplementary aid designed to help them achieve their academic goals without compromising academic standards. It has not been an easy balancing act and not everyone is satisfied with the results, but in general, we have been successful.

There are thousands of students on campus today!

### December 8, 2024

David Ben-Gurion Memorial Day and our annual Ben-Gurion Awards ceremony. This is an award I instigated some five years ago to be given to individuals and organizations from the Negev and university community who have done truly amazing things. Amongst the recipients this year are eleven students, the "Friends of Noa Argamani," who worked tirelessly to promote Noa's and the other hostages cause, nationally and internationally. Thankfully, Noa was freed in a military operation along with three other hostages on June 8, 2024. Noa attended the ceremony and joined us on stage to give the awards to her friends. Another recipient this year was Osnat Peri, whose husband Chaim sacrificed himself to save her life on October 7 at Kibbutz Nir Oz. She has led the Nir Oz community as it deals with the loss of lives and the many hostages from the Kibbutz held in Gaza. Our students and Osnat are an inspiration to us all, along with the other recipients of this year's award.

→ *Conferment Ceremony of Doctoral Degrees, September 2024. Photo: Olga Tsargorovtsev*

### January 14, 2025

We are in the process of creating the new Faculty of Computing and Information Sciences. This is both a bottom-up and top-down initiative, which aims at bringing together under one roof degree programs and research in the broad areas of computer science. It is designed to attract brilliant new faculty members, accommodate the move of the IDF technology and intelligence units to the Negev, and streamline teaching for the benefit of our students. Creating the new faculty is not easy: the respective departments and faculties that will be affected by this move need to be on-board, budgetary issues must be worked out, and byelaws adjusted. Finally, we are getting closer to the last stages of authorization in the Senate and Executive Committee. Interestingly, the departments have decided to dissolve themselves and form research hubs instead. Teaching will be managed at a faculty-wide level. This is a new departure for us, and it will be interesting to see how it functions and evolves.

### January 31, 2025

The first semester is over, and the exam period is starting. Kudos, again, to the academic and administrative staff for all they have done. I am full of admiration for all that has been achieved, including, for the second year running, increasing our share of the national research funding model. This means that, not only are we clearly doing great research and publishing it in good places, but we are also doing better than some of the other universities in Israel. For me, this is an indication that the goals I set as Rector are being achieved, and with everything else going on around us, that is a breath of fresh air.

### February 26, 2025

I am writing this on the morning that Shiri, Kfir and Ariel Bibas are being laid to rest. It puts everything else into perspective and is a reminder that there are still 63 hostages being held in the tunnels of Gaza who must be released. I hope that by the time you read this, our reality will be totally different, and for the better.



## NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

- The Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Health in the Community launched a unique master's track in Epidemiology and Medical Data Science. This program equips professionals from diverse fields with advanced tools in big data analysis and machine learning, to drive the digital revolution in public health.
- BGU is now offering an undergraduate degree in Entrepreneurship and Innovation.
- A collaboration between Israel Studies Program and the Department of Communication Studies has led to a new track in Public Diplomacy.
- The Department of the Arts has reestablished its music program after a long hiatus. The program will be led by composer and conductor Prof. Ziv Cojocar.



↑ Opening Event of the BGU Chess Club, December 2024



↑ Party for BGU reservists at the Sylvan Adams Sports Center, September 2024

## Dean of Students Office

Recognizing the profound impact of the October 7 events, the University, through the Dean of Student's Office, has invested significant resources in providing academic, emotional, and financial support to help reservists and students navigate the challenges they face.

We established a dedicated Reservist Support Office to centralize and streamline assistance. This office provides guidance on reservists' rights, academic accommodation, emotional support referrals, and learning strategies. During the 2023–24 academic year, it handled 6,100 reservist cases, 3,220 academic assistance applications, and organized over 800 tutoring groups attended by 8,600 students. More than 4,000 students participated in pre-exam study marathons. The Office also facilitated one-on-one mentoring and access to online study resources, with coordinators available weekly for consultations both on-campus and via Zoom.

To ease the transition back to academic life, the University organized an Academic Readjustment Week. The program featured refresher courses, learning skills workshops, psychologist-led support groups, and workshops on anxiety and time management, mindfulness, and exam

preparation. We also introduced various wellness initiatives such as free yoga classes and sensory tools for anxiety reduction.

Psychological and emotional support has been a key focus, with a dedicated social worker assisting hundreds of affected students, including bereaved families and evacuees. Mental health services were reinforced with additional professionals and an AI-driven mental health support app, and the University partnered with ERAN to provide a mental health hotline.

Financial aid included reservist grants totaling over NIS 6 million distributed to 5,224 students and an additional NIS 1.6 million allocated to 563 students impacted by October 7. Community engagement initiatives featured resilience-building meetings and recognition ceremonies for long-serving reservists.

Beyond supporting reservists, the Dean of Students Office launched a dedicated program for first-generation students in collaboration with the Joseph S. and Caroline Gruss Life Monument Fund and expanded the university Chess Club.



## TAL BEN-HAIM

DIRECTOR-GENERAL



The past year has been one of the most challenging in the University's (and the entire nation's) history. Yet, BGU tackled these challenges with resilience, determination, and a deep commitment to its students, faculty, and the wider Negev community. I am proud to report that our collective efforts have led to significant achievements, reinforcing our position as a leading institution of higher learning and research.

Ensuring the University's financial resilience remains a top priority, particularly in light of the ongoing war and its economic impact. BGU is taking proactive steps to diversify its revenue streams and reduce reliance on government funding. Key initiatives include: the appointment of a university asset manager responsible for maximizing income from physical assets through rentals and other means, as well as enhancing the value of real estate assets and planning strategic sales; Increasing efficiency in procurement processes and financial operations; the Way Forward fundraising campaign; and developing new income streams from non-academic training programs, such as the executive AI courses we have begun offering via the Institute. We are also addressing new regulatory and contractual demands, including updated tax regulations on donations, VAT increases, and the implementation of a new labor agreement with senior academic staff.

We are forging ahead with the development of the North Campus as a major growth engine for BGU's future. This last year we focused on completing construction of the North Campus energy center, connecting to utilities providers and bringing the infrastructure to operational status. Work on two major buildings in the North Campus – the Drahi



↑ *BGU employees Sports Day, June 2024*

Innovation and Entrepreneurship Building and the Helmsley Computer Science Building – is progressing on schedule and will be completed in 2026. We lay the cornerstone for the Ernest Scheller, Jr. Gate of Innovation – the North Campus' main entrance.

We are also continuing to advance the use of green energies on our campuses within the constraints of existing infrastructure. We are planning a conversion of existing heating systems to natural gas and are continuing to install additional photovoltaic systems to take advantage of the abundance of sunlight in the Negev.

# Campus Construction



↑ *Construction on the North Campus*

## COMPLETED THIS YEAR

- North Campus utilities tunnels and underground infrastructure
- North Campus Infrastructure Center

## UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- André Deloro Medical Research Institute – joint BGU-Soroka translational research building
- Drah Innovation and Entrepreneurship Building, North Campus
- Helmsley Computer Science Building, North Campus
- Ernest Scheller, Jr. Gate of Innovation, North Campus

## IN PLANNING

- Diane and Guilford Glazer Foundation Future Technologies Building, North Campus
- Cyndi and Max Mintzberg Cultural and Conference Centre, North Campus
- Civil and Environmental Engineering Building, North Campus
- North Campus pedestrian entrance
- North Campus development
- Sde Boker Campus gate
- Sde Boker Living Laboratory
- Sde Boker dormitories
- Eilat Campus dormitories

One of our primary concerns in recent years has been student enrollment, particularly in the face of increasing competition, changing academic preferences, and growing demand for flexible and tailored programs. I am pleased to report that despite these challenges, we have successfully returned to and even surpassed pre-COVID enrollment levels. This year, we welcomed 4,139 new undergraduate students alongside some 1,600 master's students – an overall growth of over 7%. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences alone saw an increase of 15% in enrollment.

This growth translated into an increase of NIS 34 million in funding through the "teaching model," income from the government based on student numbers. Income from tuition also grew by NIS 17 million.

At the same time, we continue to experience a decline in master's degree enrollments, particularly in non-research tracks. Addressing this challenge, along with enhancing student diversity, remains a top priority. In collaboration with our academic and administrative partners across the University, we are implementing targeted outreach

and marketing efforts to attract students from diverse backgrounds, with a particular focus on the Arab sector, women in high-tech, and students of Ethiopian origin. BGU has also expanded its academic offerings, launching new programs aimed at emerging fields and market demands, such as a new program in Innovation and Entrepreneurship in the Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management.

Our pre-academic and extension programs remain a vital pipeline for future students. This year, 2,550 students participated in pre-academic preparatory programs, including "Aliyah to Academia." The Jusidman Science Center for Youth engaged 2,024 pupils in ongoing programs and another 3,000 in briefer exposure events. The University Extension Center offered 33 different programs to over 1,000 participants. Looking forward, we aim to expand these offerings to include specialized pre-academic programs for haredim (ultra-Orthodox), English-speaking olim, IDF personnel, and prospective students in the natural sciences.

The University continues working to improve all aspects of the student experience, by improving physical facilities and



← Open Day for prospective students, June 2024

creating a Student Services Center that covers all aspects of the student experience. We are also working on a long overdue upgrade of core computing systems, including student-related systems, and continue to expand digital services and resources through the University's libraries.

**We are forging ahead with the development of the North Campus as a major growth engine for BGU's future.**

Over the past year, BGU continued to strengthen its research activities, increasing our share of government funding derived from the research model. Our efforts have borne fruit, with BGU's relative share of the research model increasing and government funding based on research output growing by nearly NIS 42 million. Our strategic goal is to achieve a 10% increase in the number of research

proposals submitted, with a particular emphasis on securing more European Research Council (ERC) grants through the newly established "ERC Success Hub."

Despite progress, we face ongoing challenges, including an unofficial academic boycott in Europe that affects international research collaborations. To counter this, we are actively improving support services for faculty members seeking research funding, providing personalized coaching, and implementing new IT systems to streamline grant application processes.

In the face of adversity, BGU has demonstrated remarkable strength, adaptability, and commitment to excellence. I extend my deepest gratitude to our benefactors, faculty, staff, and students, whose unwavering dedication ensures that our University remains a beacon of knowledge, innovation, and social impact. Together, we are shaping the future of the Negev and beyond.



NIS **42** MILLION INCREASE IN FUNDING THROUGH THE "RESEARCH MODEL"



NIS **34** MILLION INCREASE IN FUNDING THROUGH THE "TEACHING MODEL"



Prof.  
**DAN BLUMBERG**  
 VICE PRESIDENT FOR REGIONAL  
 AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT



The Office of the Vice President for Regional and Industrial Development is responsible for developing and maintaining the University's strategic role in the technology ecosystem of Beer-Sheva and the Negev. It focuses on building and strengthening ties between the University, government and industry, with an emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship. The Office is also responsible for BGU's collaboration with the Ministry of Defense with regards to the relocation of the IDF to the south, including the creation of joint academic programs for soldiers and commanders, providing environmental and regional support, and addressing challenges arising from the relocation. Finally, the office is involved in the development of the Beer-Sheva Innovation District, aiming to strengthen the southern technology ecosystem and foster new connections with local and regional stakeholders, corporations, venture capital funds, and more.

The Negev Urban Research (NUR) Lab was inaugurated on January 1, 2025. The NUR Lab is a unique collaboration led by Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, MIT, and the Faculty of Design and Architecture at the Shamoon College of Engineering. It is the youngest partner in the City Science Lab Network of 10 international labs focused on urban innovation. The lab will integrate experimental applied technology developed by partner academic institutions into significant planning processes in Beer-Sheva and across the south, through substantive collaborations with municipalities, government ministries, and civil organizations. Additionally, the lab will initiate research on climate-dependent regional development in Beer-Sheva and the future of desert cities.

**The youngest partner in the  
 City Science Lab Network of  
 10 international labs focused  
 on urban innovation**

Over the past year, the University invested in creating several specialized academic programs aimed at military personnel stationed in the Negev. Developed in collaboration with the IDF, the initiative includes programs such as a specialized BSc in Information Systems Engineering for IDF communication instructors, funded by the Ministry of Defense.



↑ VP Prof. Dan Blumberg spoke at Cybertech Tel-Aviv 2025, in March



Prof. Razi Vago



Prof. Hugo Guterman



104

NEW PATENT APPLICATIONS FILED



50

RESEARCH AGREEMENTS WITH INDUSTRY



OVER

150

START-UPS ESTABLISHED BASED ON BGU TECHNOLOGIES



## BGN

Over the past year, BGN, Ben-Gurion University's technology transfer company, faced significant challenges in promoting industry-funded research at BGU as many researchers, students, and staff were called to active reserve duty. Under these circumstances, we prioritized ensuring the continuity of ongoing research projects, while expanding our search for new industry partners.

Despite these challenges, BGN launched 50 new research projects with industry partners. BGN also continued supporting framework agreements with large multinational corporations, maintaining collaborations with major partners such as Deutsche Telekom, Fujitsu, Toshiba, and Lenovo while establishing important new agreements with Meta, Microsoft, and Google, which we hope will form the foundation for long-term partnerships with these companies.

Two BGN startups completed their successful acquisitions in 2024:

- **Cartiheal**, which is developing a biocompatible coral-based implant for knee cartilage repair based on Prof. Razi Vago's research, was acquired by Smith and Nephew for USD 330 million.
- **DiA Imaging Analysis**, based on Prof. Hugo Guterman's research in AI-powered heart ultrasound imaging technology for mobile devices, was acquired by Philips Healthcare Imaging for close to USD 100 million.

The National Institute for Biotechnology in the Negev (NIBN) is now fully integrated with BGN, and continues to lead groundbreaking projects in biopharma and biotechnology. A unique antigen array technology developed by Prof. Tomer Hertz with NIBN funding secured a USD 1.3 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to develop and validate a novel, safe approach for measuring immune responses to polioviruses.

The challenging economic environment of 2024 made raising initial capital particularly difficult for early-stage startups. In response, the Israel Innovation Authority launched an initiative to establish and partially fund eight new angel investor clubs focused on deep tech startups. BGN partnered with several applicant groups, four of which were selected to receive funding. These angel clubs now provide valuable opportunities to present BGU technologies to wider audiences and are expected to become important vehicles for funding deep tech innovations in coming years.



↑ Prof. Dan Blumberg, Beer-Sheva Mayor Ruvik Danilovich, and Dr. Ariel Noyman of MIT, at the dedication of the NUR City Science Lab in Beer-Sheva, January 2025

## The University created several specialized academic programs aimed at military personnel stationed in the Negev

The Re'amim program, a combined BSc-MSc five-year elite program in electrical engineering, as well as **Brakim**, a revived program offering a double undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering and physics and a MSc in mechanical engineering, were both approved by the IDF's Human Resources Directorate. Also in development are the **Galaxia** program, a unique BSc-MSc 4-year pre-military program

in physics, and **Zur**, a collaboration with intelligence technology units, that will launch in October 2025.

The Office has also continued to foster various research collaborations with governmental and private entities over the past year, further contributing to the University's mission of advancing the region and positioning itself as a key player in regional development.



240+

STARTUPS AND VENTURES



\$40 MILLION

INVESTED IN YAZAMUT 360° COMPANIES



2,000

PARTICIPANTS IN YAZAMUT PROGRAMS



200

GRADUATES FROM THE LEADERS PROGRAM



8,000

MEMBERS IN 21 ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES



→ Participants in the Cactus Capital program

## YAZAMUT 360°

Helmed by Prof. Carmel Sofer and Dana Gavish, Yazamut 360°, BGU's Center for Entrepreneurship, is a powerful engine for attracting high-quality students who are passionate about innovation and business creation. Since its establishment in 2019, Yazamut 360° has been training the next generation of innovators, serving as a bridge between academia and industry through a combination of hands-on programs, collaborations with key players in the ecosystem, and a commitment to fostering entrepreneurial thinking. In recognition of its status as a leader in entrepreneurial education, the Center received the 2024 INSA Innovation Award.

Adapting to the realities of wartime, Yazamut 360° ensured that no student missed out on its programs due to military service. Reservists were supported through recorded sessions, study materials, and Zoom meetings directly from the field. Despite challenges posed by the war, Cactus Capital, our student-led venture capital fund, broke an all-time record this year, receiving 134 student startup investment applications in a single semester.

One of the standout initiatives launched this year was *Nahlaq Al Mustaqbal* (Foreseeing The Future), a unique podcast course in collaboration with the Office of the VP for Inclusion & Diversity and BGU Radio that teaches entrepreneurship to Arabic speakers. The Center also introduced AI training for its staff, in preparation for integrating AI tools into student learning. Additionally, a new course in collaboration with the Oazis accelerator was launched to support graduates in their entrepreneurial journey. The Center's Negev Prime e-commerce program hosted Israel's first-ever nationwide sellers' conference in Tel Aviv.

Yazamut 360° began a long-term collaboration with industry partners in a groundbreaking desert-tech accelerator focused on water and food security. It is also expanding its reach internationally, launching a global program to share its award-winning entrepreneurship education model with universities, innovation centers, and Jewish communities worldwide. The Ira M Ingerman Entrepreneur of the Year award was given to Gilad Ovadia.



Prof.  
**MICHAL BAR-ASHER SIEGAL**  
 VICE PRESIDENT FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT



The Office of the Vice President for Global Engagement at BGU is responsible for shaping and implementing the University's international strategy and global engagement policies. This includes developing academic policies and executing initiatives that foster collaborative research, academic exchanges, and institutional partnerships, cultivating a diverse, inclusive, and globally interconnected academic environment.

These efforts have resulted in the expansion of international student programs, the creation of transformative study-abroad opportunities for BGU students, and the establishment of strategic academic collaborations. Through these initiatives, BGU strengthens its global presence and reinforces its position as a leading institution of higher education.

To further advance international initiatives and strengthen BGU's global standing, the Office is now supported by three newly established advisory forums:

1. The Deans and Administrative Directors Forum: This cross-faculty forum discusses key challenges and assists in implementing international initiatives.
2. The Faculty Representatives Forum: This forum promotes specific international projects and collaboratively develops strategies to enhance global engagement within their respective faculties.
3. The International Advisory Forum: This group of friends and supporters of the University contribute their expertise and networks to foster global partnerships.

These forums play a crucial role in developing new strategies, expanding international activities, and positioning BGU as a key player in the global academic arena.

#### STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Prof. Bar-Asher Siegal travels extensively to establish new academic partnerships and expand existing collaborations. This year, she met with leading Canadian universities and has also been expanding BGU's collaborations in Europe, including Italy, Germany, and France. A recent delegation to India, led by BGU President Prof. Daniel Chamovitz, engaged with top Indian institutions.

To further strengthen relationships with institutions worldwide, the Office of the VP for Global Engagement has been actively working with Israeli embassies around the world and welcomed visits from foreign embassies, such as Panama and China. These collaborations have demonstrated that close ties with Israeli diplomatic missions play a vital role in advancing the University's international goals. New Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) were signed with multiple universities across the world, fostering student exchange programs, joint research collaborations, and the development of joint courses and degree programs.

#### OUR STUDENTS

International students at Ben-Gurion University come from over 70 countries, forming a diverse, vibrant, and dynamic community. What sets BGU apart is the full integration of international students with their Israeli peers – in classrooms, labs, and across campus life. This unique academic environment not only provides top-tier education but also enables students to develop critical skills such as creative problem-solving and teamwork in multicultural settings. Beyond academics, BGU offers an unparalleled student experience, with a welcoming and supportive community, exciting cultural events, trips across Israel, and



↑ Participants in the 2024-25 African Studies MA program

a true sense of belonging, making it a home away from home for students from around the world.

## International students at Ben-Gurion University come from over 70 countries, forming a diverse, vibrant, and dynamic community

Interest in international experiences continues to grow, and this year hundreds of Israeli students attended events to learn about opportunities for a semester abroad as part of BGU's student exchange programs. More than 70 students embarked on a semester abroad at leading universities worldwide. These programs provide them with invaluable academic, cultural, and personal experiences, enriching their education and expanding their global perspectives.

### EXPANDING INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Over the past year, we have launched many academic programs to support international students and researchers. The programs are designed to enhance global engagement with BGU, attract international students, and foster research collaborations worldwide. They include:

- The Desert Academic Retreat (DARE) summer program for international faculty aims to foster innovation and professional growth: researchers from around the

world immerse themselves in a tranquil, intellectually enriching environment that ensures dedicated time for advancing one's research and promises dynamic cultural and academic exchanges alongside opportunities for collaboration with BGU faculty.

- The BGU "Sandwich PhD" program, enabling international PhD students from leading universities around the world to spend a fully funded year at BGU as part of their studies.
- A range of summer courses, including Archaeology, Sustainable Agricultural Solutions, Emergency and Tactical Medicine, and Mediterranean Sea studies.
- Financial support for female master's and PhD students to travel to conferences.
- Several new projects addressing the recent rise in antisemitism, including financial support for short term visits to Israel by senior international scholars and international scientific conferences.

To support these initiatives, the Office of the VP for Global Engagement has successfully secured funding grants from several governmental and non-profit organizations. To effectively promote these programs, the Office has also developed a comprehensive international marketing strategy, which leverages a wide range of professional marketing platforms to maximize global outreach and visibility.



↑ *Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Prof. Rab. Ariel Stofenmacher, rector of the Instituto Universitario Abarbanel, Argentina, Jan. 2025*



↑ *Welcome Center activities for international students, Oct. 2024*

← *Visit of H.E. Ezra Cohen, Ambassador of Panama to the State of Israel, Dec. 2024*

### ENHANCING SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The University Welcome Center continues to expand its support services for international students, including assistance with visas, health insurance, bank account setup, and general administrative support; cultural and social programs, including trips around Israel, communal dinners, movie nights, and social events; and family-friendly activities for students with children.

A significant achievement this year is the expansion of health insurance coverage for international students, which now includes pregnancy and childbirth coverage, psychological counseling, and physiotherapy.

### OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AMIDST THE CONFLICT

The ongoing war presents significant challenges, including calls for academic boycotts and the suspension of collaborations with Israeli institutions. Nevertheless, the Office of the VP for Global Engagement remains committed to fostering global partnerships, strengthening academic ties and promoting open dialogue.

We collaborate with our counterparts at other Israeli universities to address the challenges of the moment

and enhance global academic engagement. We regularly appear in print and television media to discuss these issues and have presented our efforts in this field at several forums, including a keynote address to the gathering of the international Young Academies of Sciences in Berlin. Through these engagements, we have positioned BGU as a leader in addressing these challenges.

To support faculty members facing boycott-related incidents abroad, we launched a dedicated website, which collects information about incidents and also offers essential information on international security protocols, workshops, and resources for navigating academic boycotts and hostile environments.

### A THRIVING GLOBAL NETWORK

Despite the above challenges, international engagement with BGU is growing and thriving. True academic partners around the world continue to stand by us, demonstrating their commitment to maintaining strong ties with Israeli institutions and fostering international collaboration. These strategic partnerships reaffirm the importance of academic cooperation and reflect a shared dedication to advancing global education and research.



Prof.  
**RAZ JELINEK**  
 VICE PRESIDENT AND DEAN FOR  
 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT



The Office of the Vice President and Dean for Research and Development advances and supports research across all faculties and disciplines of the University, through the Research & Development Authority and additional channels. In the past year, this has entailed various initiatives that aim to improve BGU researchers' success in securing competitive research grants and external funding, development and advancement of multidisciplinary research programs, and investment in the infrastructure that enables cutting-edge research.

In accordance with the University's long-term strategic focus on multidisciplinary research, we continued developing collaborations within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management, as well as between the Faculty of Engineering Sciences and the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research.

Investment in cutting-edge scientific infrastructure remains central to our mission. This year, we acquired several advanced research instruments, including a Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM) for materials characterization, a cryo-FIB electron microscope, and a cryogenic transmission electron microscope (cryo-TEM) for protein structure analysis. Additionally, a dedicated program was implemented to upgrade research lab equipment within the Faculty of Natural Sciences, ensuring that researchers have access to state-of-the-art facilities. These additions will significantly enhance the capabilities of BGU researchers and strengthen the University's position in key scientific fields.

As part of our long-term strategy to enhance research infrastructure, we provided financial and logistical support for the establishment and operation of new multidisciplinary University research centers. These centers received resources for initial activities, and we facilitated academic retreats to promote cross-disciplinary collaboration. New multidisciplinary programs supported this year include the Earthquake Mechanics Research Center, BGU-FOR, the DUET Center, the Field Family Medical Simulation Center, and the Financial Data Research Initiative.

### Investment in cutting-edge scientific infrastructure remains central to our mission

A major initiative this year was the expansion of the ERC Success Hub, an ongoing effort to encourage and support applications for European Research Council grants. Our efforts to strengthen BGU's presence in major funding programs have already yielded impressive results, with our researchers securing substantial new grants. We also prioritized increasing participation in the Council for Higher Education's (CHE) "Research Centers" program, leading to significant achievements: BGU researchers are now leading four newly awarded research centers. Additionally, BGU, in collaboration with the Technion - Israel Institute of Technology and the University of Haifa, successfully secured funding to establish a national research infrastructure in the field of multiomics, which uses big data in biological analysis.



← Computation and the Humanities Research Festival, January 2025

↓ Research excellence awards for high school students were awarded at the Women in STEM Scientist Day, June 2024. Left: Prof. Yael Hashiloni-Dolev, President's Advisor on Gender Equity

Strengthening collaborations with external partners remains a priority, leading to new joint research initiatives with organizations such as the ADI Negev rehabilitation center and the Rosetrees Foundation, alongside expanded international partnerships with research institutions including UT Austin, ULB-Brussels, and NICE-JITRI in China.

To promote academic excellence in the humanities and social sciences, we launched targeted funding programs to support scholarly publications and extended specific research support for teaching fellows in the Faculties of Business & Management and Humanities & Social Sciences.

Our commitment to fostering research excellence extends to individual researchers as well. We continued to invest in faculty recruitment and retention, allocating NIS 15 million toward faculty absorption packages to attract and support outstanding researchers. We actively promoted and provided institutional matching funds for the CHE's "Research Fellows" program, which resulted in six BGU researchers receiving prestigious fellowships.



Through these efforts, the Office remains committed to fostering a thriving research environment at BGU and expanding the University's impact on both national and global levels. We look forward to building on these achievements in the coming year and continuing to support groundbreaking research that will shape the future.



83

ISF GRANTS AWARDED



OUT OF

234

SUBMISSIONS

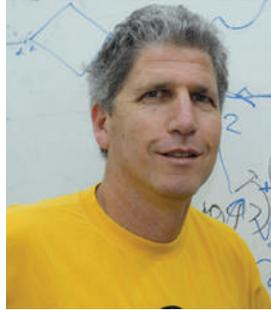
3

CHE EQUIPMENT GRANTS



TOTALING

NIS 27 MILLION



Prof. Yigal Meir



Dr. Eran Maniv.

Photo: Shay Shmueli



Dr. Nir Shlezinger

## NOTABLE GRANTS

- Prof. Yigal Meir from the Department of Physics was awarded a prestigious Breakthrough Research Grant (Mapatz) from the Israel Science Foundation. This highly competitive program supports scientists who have made significant contributions to their fields. Prof. Meir is the first BGU researcher to receive this distinguished grant.
- Dr. Nir Shlezinger of the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering was awarded a 2024 ERC Starting Grant to support his research on integrating artificial intelligence into wireless communication.
- Dr. Eran Maniv of the Department of Physics, received an ERC Horizons Grant to support his research into new quantum materials.

### TOTAL INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH (USD M)\*

	Competitive grants & contracts	Non-competitive grants & contracts	Donations	BGU research funding	Total
2023/24	43.7	50.3	27.1	10.4	131.5
2022/23	48.2	55.0	21.3	9.8	134.3
2021/22	50.7	44.2	25.0	14.5	134.4

\*Figures are based on full amounts of research grants or donor commitments, and not payments received.



Prof.  
**SARAB ABU-RABIA QUEDER**  
 VICE PRESIDENT FOR DIVERSITY  
 AND INCLUSION



The Office of the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion works to advance the University's mission by maximizing the talents of all segments of Israeli society and fostering diverse, inclusive and dynamic research and educational environments. Consequently, one of our primary objectives is to create opportunities for students from underrepresented and peripheral communities to enter academia. By addressing the difficulties they face, we aim to bridge gaps and promote accessibility to higher education.

This year, we launched the **Hebrew Key to Success** course, which trains Jewish students to teach spoken Hebrew in Bedouin schools. Now in its second cohort, the initiative aims to bridge cultural divides while simultaneously enhancing Bedouin students' proficiency in spoken Hebrew. This program, supported by the Ministry of Education and the Mabat NGO in Hura, is part of our broader strategy to foster meaningful connections between different communities.

To increase access to higher education for students of Ethiopian origin, we established the **Together to Academia** mentorship program, designed to identify and support high school students of Ethiopian origin with strong academic potential. In the pilot stage targeting 10th-grade students, we provided tailored academic support from selected and specially trained BGU student mentors.

We established an academic preparatory program focused on health and natural sciences for graduates of the ultra-Orthodox education system. Classes take place in gender-segregated settings, as an **initial step** towards full integration into mixed-gender academic settings.

In January 2025, Ben-Gurion University hosted Israel's first academic conference on diversity and inclusion

in academia, bringing together approximately 200 researchers, students, philanthropists, and officials from various disciplines and institutions across the country.

#### **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN A TIME OF WAR**

A crucial focus of our work is fostering an inclusive and tolerant campus environment. Despite the profound adverse impact of the events of October 7 and the ensuing war on the University community, we have chosen to view the crisis as an opportunity to reexamine intergroup relations on campus. We are dedicated to promoting meaningful interactions between Jewish and Arab students, facilitating dialogue that fosters mutual understanding and lays the groundwork for future leadership rooted in equity and shared responsibility.

The conflict has created significant challenges to maintaining cohesion and mutual respect among students and faculty. To address them, we implemented



↑ *Diversity Day conference, January 2025*



↑ *Participants in the Hebrew Key to Success program*

several initiatives designed to rebuild trust and facilitate constructive dialogue among diverse campus groups. The Shared Lives Ambassadors program was established to create a sustainable student-led framework for strengthening intergroup relations on campus. Now in its second year, the program provides student leaders from across the University's different faculties with training in three fundamental areas: partnership, entrepreneurship, and leadership. Participants engage in structured dialogues on complex social issues and receive tools for effective and empathetic communication. In the applied phase, they develop initiatives to promote a safe, inclusive, and cooperative campus environment. The program is supported by the Rothschild Ambassadors Program and funded in partnership with the Blaustein Foundation and SVF, the Social Venture Fund for Jewish-Arab Equality and Shared Society. We also established a Shared Space Forum for faculty members dedicated to promoting inclusivity.

Throughout the war and the return to academic life, the Office for Diversity and Inclusion played a crucial role in supporting students and faculty. We facilitated online open forums for Jewish and Arab students separately, providing safe spaces for expressing emotions, concerns and expectations, and we established a leadership group

for Arab students to help them navigate conflict-related challenges.

To further support campus resilience, we trained dormitory representatives to act as mediators between students and housing management, provided faculty with training on mediation and restorative justice skills, and published clear campus guidelines on freedom of expression in accordance with legal standards. To further advance our commitment to equity, we are implementing anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practices, and we arranged specialized training sessions for senior and junior academic faculty on teaching in diverse classrooms during emergencies. These efforts aim to create a more just and inclusive academic culture.

In May 2024, the Office of the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion conducted an extensive study among BGU students to assess their sense of belonging, satisfaction, and motivation for shared living in the wake of October 7. Supported by the UJA, this study provides crucial insights into evolving campus dynamics and informs the development of targeted interventions, including those described above. Ben-Gurion University remains committed to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and resilient academic community, even in the face of significant challenges.

## STUDENT DIVERSITY 2024-25

# 1,558

Arabs from the north

8%

# 585

Bedouins

3%

# 138

Ethiopian origin

0.7%

# 37

Ultra-Orthodox\*

0.2%

\* Graduates of the ultra-Orthodox school system



## COMMUNITY ACTION DEPARTMENT

The Community Action Department has been fostering the University's connection to the Negev community for over 50 years. Its programs aim to reduce social disparities while instilling values of equality and mutual responsibility, as reflected in its motto: **Society is Stronger With You.**

The Department not only provides ongoing community support thanks to 300 actively involved students but also focuses on making higher education accessible to underrepresented populations.

Each year, 800 children and adults visit the campus through a range of initiatives, including: The **Kidma** program, which offers basic adult education taught by students from the Keren Moshe Leadership Program, supported by the Halpérin family of Switzerland. The curriculum covers Hebrew, English, and computer skills. Over 150 passionate students are enrolled this year, including new immigrants, Bedouins, and individuals with learning disabilities.

The **Bishvil Ha'Daat** program, aimed at adults with special needs (autism and intellectual disabilities), marked its 10th anniversary last year with two new courses, in life sciences and psychology. Sixty participants enjoy benefits such

as increased self-confidence and social integration.

**The People's University**, integrated into BGU last year, exposed 200 disadvantaged adults referred by social services to various fields of knowledge – psychology, business, and medicine – taught by BGU undergraduates.

The **Justice with You** program supports marginalized women, providing knowledge about their legal rights through lectures by volunteer lawyers and a peer support group led by student mentors.

We have expanded the **Speaking Hebrew at BGU** program, which helps Bedouin women learn practical Hebrew, with two classes in Kuseife, a Bedouin town.

This year's Community Theater project, **One Saturday**, focused on the trauma of October 7. Students and residents worked together to translate life-stories into performances with an accompanying photography exhibition.

In the wake of the Iron Swords War, the Department received a major donation for scholarships, which enabled significant and meaningful student activity in support of the Negev's vulnerable populations – offering solidarity and comfort to those in need during this challenging time.



# JEFF KAYE

VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT



I am honored to present this year's report, which highlights the achievements and milestones of the Resource Development and Public Affairs departments under my direction. This past year has been a defining time for the University, as we rose to challenges with determination and continued building a brighter future together.

### ADAPTING TO CHALLENGES AND STRENGTHENING SUPPORT

The past year has been a period of recovery and progress. Our global community came together around BGU's mission, reaffirming that our supporters are the foundation of our resilience. Through innovative outreach – including webinars, video testimonials, speaking tours to communities by our remarkable students, and written updates – we amplified BGU's story to inspire new partnerships and commitments.

Our fundraising efforts have been pivotal. Building on the success of last year's emergency campaign, we secured significant contributions to support student scholarships, research initiatives, and state-of-the-art facilities. This progress brings us closer to achieving the ambitious goals of the Way Forward Global Campaign.

### FOSTERING GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

We deepened our relationships with supporters worldwide this year, welcoming solidarity missions and delegations of philanthropic leaders to our campuses. These visits provided firsthand experiences of BGU's transformative impact, strengthening advocacy for our mission.

Our senior leaders also maintained a strong global presence, engaging with Jewish communities and



↑ Toni Young and Jeff Kaye at the Ceremony Recognizing BGU's Loyal Friends and Supporters. 54th Board of Governors meeting, May 2024

supporters at events, galas, and private meetings. These interactions secured vital resources while fostering partnerships amidst global challenges such as rising antisemitism.

### NEW LEADERSHIP

The Zin Fellows and Halutz Leadership programs continue to flourish, engaging cohorts of passionate future leaders dedicated to advancing BGU's mission. This year, the Zin Fellows sent its seventh cohort to Israel, while the Halutz program celebrated its fourth cohort, both fostering meaningful connections and empowering participants to become advocates for the University and its transformative vision.



← Ceremony awarding donor-funded scholarships to student reservists, December 2024. Dean of Students, Prof. Orna Almog, standing in the center, VP Jeff Kaye sitting in front

TOTAL  
RAISED TO  
DATE



\$1 billion target

**CELEBRATING PROGRESS AND MILESTONES**

The Way Forward Global Campaign continues to gain momentum, approaching – at the end of 2024 – the halfway point toward its 2030 \$1 billion goal. This achievement reflects the dedication of our supporters and the tireless efforts of BGU’s faculty, staff, and leadership.

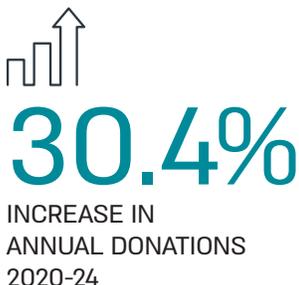
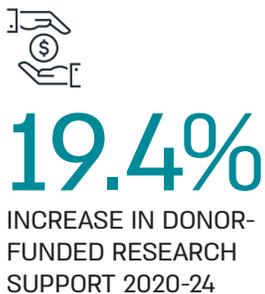
On the North Campus, several transformative projects are underway. The Ernest Scheller, Jr. Gate of Innovation

is becoming a reality, while construction progresses on the Drahi Innovation and Entrepreneurship Building and the Helmsley Computer Science Building. At this year’s Board of Governors meeting, we will celebrate the groundbreaking of the Cyndi and Max Mintzberg Cultural and Conference Centre, a landmark facility for Beer-Sheva and the Negev.

Our global outreach efforts have also expanded, with the revitalization of donor communities in Latin America, South Africa, and France. Contributions from supporters in Israel, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and beyond continue to drive our progress, with Israeli donor engagement reaching unprecedented levels.

**LOOKING AHEAD: THE NEXT PHASE**

As we press ahead toward our \$1 billion goal, the unwavering support of our global community remains our greatest strength. With \$500 million raised, we are well-positioned to reach \$700 million by May 2026.



- Supporting emergency response and resilience-building initiatives in the Negev.
- Increasing investments in student scholarships and fellowships.
- Critical financial resources are needed to enhance social and economic resilience in the Negev, as part of our commitment to rebuilding the region bigger and better.

As we look to the future, BGU remains steadfast in its role as a pillar of hope and resilience for the Negev and beyond. Following the devastating events of October 7, we are not only addressing the immediate needs of our community but are also determined to rebuild stronger than ever. Guided by David Ben-Gurion's vision, we are committed to ensuring that the Negev flourishes as a beacon of innovation, sustainability, and opportunity for generations to come.

I extend my deepest gratitude to our academic and administrative colleagues, international associations, and volunteer leaders. Your dedication and commitment continue to drive BGU's progress and amplify its impact.

With your support, I am confident we will surpass our goals and realize the vision of making the Negev flourish. Let us move forward together, united by a shared purpose and a brighter future.

Our immediate priorities include:

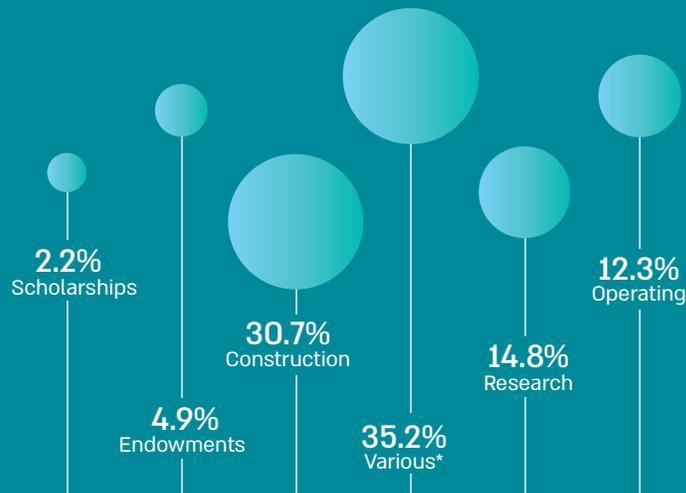
- Securing funding for the Civil and Environmental Engineering Building on the North Campus.
- Constructing a new medical school building and expanding medical education programs.

## OUR WORLDWIDE FAMILY OF ASSOCIATES AT WORK 2023/24 YEAR-END FIGURES

	Total
Contributions Received	\$ 61,441,681
Interest Income from Endowments	\$ 31,817,108
Endowment Fund Balance (as of 30/9/2024)	\$ 924,626,261

1. Contribution figures are gross and do not reflect local fundraising charges.
2. All figures are approximate due to fluctuating exchange and interest rates.
3. Endowment balance includes \$535.9 million in the Marcus Fund and approximately \$75.3 million in endowment funds held in the US by and on behalf of A4BGU. (The figure does not include approximately \$28.7 million in trust funds held by and on behalf of A4BGU).
4. 2023/24 income distribution figure above represents the income distributed on endowments held in Israel (4%); \$19.58 million income released from the Marcus Fund; and \$2.15 million (4%) income released on endowment funds held in the U.S. by and on behalf of A4BGU.

## DESIGNATION OF DONATIONS



\* Various: Leadership training; community involvement; support for certain centers/institutes; fellowships and scholarships outside the operating budget; faculty development; special projects; pending designation.

BGU IN FACTS  
& FIGURES





# SENIOR ADMINISTRATION

## Lloyd Goldman

Chairman of the Board of Governors

## Avi Nissenkorn

Chairman of the Executive Committee

## Prof. Daniel Chamovitz

President

## Prof. Chaim Hames

Rector

## Tal Ben-Haim

Director-General

## Prof. Sarab Abu-Rabia Queder

Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion

## Prof. Michal Bar-Asher Siegal

Vice President for Global Engagement

## Prof. Dan Blumberg

Vice President for Regional and Industrial Development

## Prof. Raz Jelinek

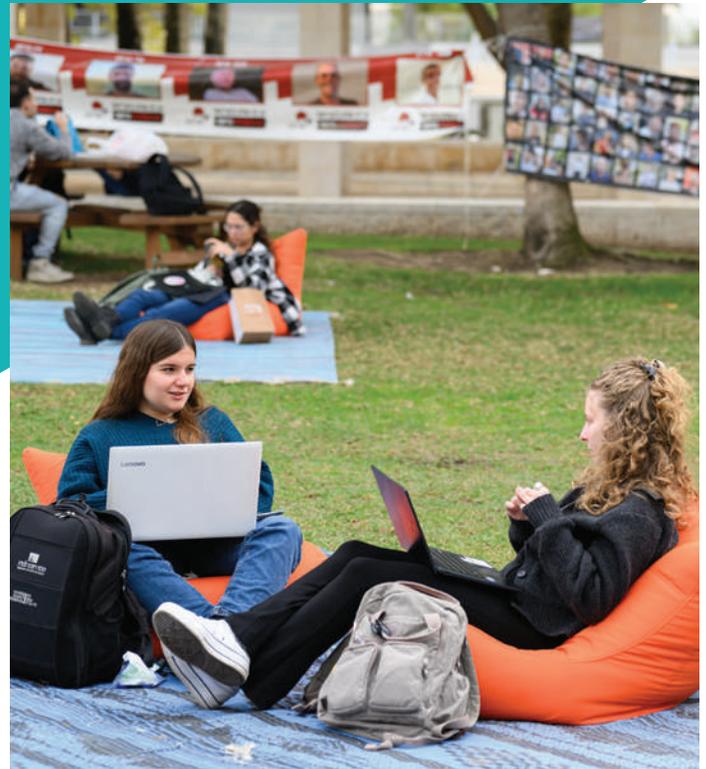
Vice President and Dean for Research and Development

## Jeff Kaye

Vice President for Public Affairs and Resource Development

## Prof. Orna Almog

Dean of Students



## Prof. Orna Braun-Lewensohn

Dean, Kreitman School of Advanced Graduate Studies

## Prof. Gabriel Lemcoff

Dean, Faculty of Natural Sciences

## Prof. Yaniv Gelbstein

Dean, Faculty of Engineering Sciences

## Prof. Yotam Lurie

Dean, Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management

## Prof. Reli Hershkovitz

Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences

## Prof. Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby

Dean, Pinchas Sapir Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

## Prof. Noam Weisbrod

Director, Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research and Sde Boker Campus

## Prof. Ofer Ovadia

Dean, Eilat Campus

## Prof. Gal deBotton

Vice Rector

## Prof. Louisa Meshi

Pro-Rector for Education

# BGU IN NUMBERS

## DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS BY FACULTY AND DEGREE, 2022-2024<sup>1</sup>

	Humanities and Social Sciences	Natural Sciences	Engineering Sciences	Health Sciences	Business and Management	Desert Studies	Kreitman Graduate School	Ben-Gurion Research Institute	Interdisciplinary Studies Unit <sup>2</sup>	Total for degree level
<b>2024-2025</b>										
Bachelor's	3,150	2,262	5,289	2,041	1,102	0	0	0	598	12,837
Master's	980	347	1,085	997	739	98	0	19	0	4,201
PhD	477	317	428	239	53	128	33	0	3	1,672
Postdoc	83	97	71	14	2	48	9	0	0	324
Non-Degree	61	1	92	19	15	2	0	1	0	182
Teaching Certificate	119	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	174
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,750</b>	<b>3,015</b>	<b>6,821</b>	<b>3,232</b>	<b>1,903</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>19,818</b>

**ENROLLMENT<sup>3</sup> 19,358**

	Humanities and Social Sciences	Natural Sciences	Engineering Sciences	Health Sciences	Business and Management	Desert Studies	Kreitman Graduate School	Ben-Gurion Research Institute	Interdisciplinary Studies Unit <sup>2</sup>	Total for degree level
<b>2023-2024</b>										
Bachelor's	3,014	2,237	5,219	2,276	1,099	0	0	0	557	13,183
Master's	986	315	968	666	736	95	0	23	0	3,789
PhD	467	292	417	242	49	104	34	0	9	1,614
Postdoc	73	99	65	36	3	48	5	0	0	329
Non-Degree	63	2	140	20	18	2	0	1	0	244
Teaching Certificate	127	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	127
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,625</b>	<b>2,935</b>	<b>6,680</b>	<b>3,169</b>	<b>1,903</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>19,286</b>

**ENROLLMENT<sup>3</sup> 18,946**

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Student numbers include students studying at BGU in Beer-Sheva, Sde Boker, and Eilat, in both degree and non-degree programs. They do not include international students, students in pre-academic prep courses, the Air Force pilot program, and auditors. The above figures refer to the first semester only.

<sup>2</sup> The Interdisciplinary Studies Unit oversees students enrolled in interdisciplinary schools and programs, including the School of Brain Sciences and Cognition and the Goldman Sonnenfeldt School of Sustainability and Climate Change.

<sup>3</sup> Actual number of students enrolled does not match total, because there are students enrolled in multiple faculties or pursuing multiple degrees.

## 2024-2025 OVERALL UNIVERSITY BUDGET (NIS/USD THOUSANDS IN CURRENT PRICES)

	Operating Budget		Research Budget		Development Budget		Special Programs		Total Budget	
	NIS	USD	NIS	USD	NIS	USD	NIS	USD	NIS	USD
<b>Expenditure</b>	1,544,000	411,733	355,300	94,747	171,189	45,650	138,327	36,887	2,208,816	589,018
<b>Income</b>	1,544,000	411,733	355,300	94,747	171,189	45,650	146,215	38,991	2,216,704	591,121

## UNIVERSITY OPERATING BUDGET (NIS/USD MILLIONS)

	2023-2024			2024-2025			% change
	NIS m	USD m	%	NIS m	USD m	%	
<b>INCOME</b>							
CHE Planning & Budgeting Committee	1,093.1	303.6	75.4%	1,168.7	311.6	75.7%	6.9%
Tuition and dorms	219.7	61.0	15.2%	236.9	63.2	15.3%	7.8%
Contributions	1.0	0.3	0.1%	1.0	0.3	0.1%	0.0%
Endowment funds	62.6	17.4	4.3%	63.0	16.8	4.1%	0.6%
Other income	69.6	19.3	4.8%	70.4	18.8	4.6%	1.1%
Transfer from funds	4.0	1.1	0.3%	4.1	1.1	0.3%	3.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,450.0</b>	<b>402.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,544.0</b>	<b>411.7</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>

### EXPENDITURE

Salaries	1,055.2	293.1	72.8%	1,115.0	297.3	72.2%	5.7%
Fellowships & student assistance	93.0	25.8	6.4%	95.3	25.4	6.2%	2.4%
Teaching & research	56.3	15.6	3.9%	66.2	17.6	4.3%	17.5%
Institutes & research centers	55.4	15.4	3.8%	58.7	15.7	3.8%	6.0%
Computer expenses	22.9	6.4	1.6%	25.6	6.8	1.7%	11.8%
Library expenses	30.3	8.4	2.1%	31.7	8.5	2.1%	4.6%
Administration	32.8	9.1	2.3%	39.6	10.6	2.6%	20.8%
Maintenance	98.1	27.3	6.8%	106.2	28.3	6.9%	8.3%
Financing	6.0	1.7	0.4%	5.7	1.5	0.4%	-5.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,450.0</b>	<b>402.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,544.0</b>	<b>411.7</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>

NIS/USD exchange rate: 3.60

3.75

Higher education budgeting index 140.58

147.95

# BGU WELCOMES OUTSTANDING NEW FACULTY MEMBERS

[MEET OUR  
NEW FACULTY  
ONLINE >>](#)

Great minds don't just push the boundaries of their fields – they break them down, building bridges across disciplines to spark new ideas and unexpected discoveries. This year, we welcomed a remarkable group of over 30 researchers whose bold thinking and collaborative spirit align with our University's vision: to be a hub of excellence where multiple fields converge to transform knowledge and improve lives. We are eager to see the impact of their work in the years to come.



**DR. RINAT AVRAHAM**  
Department of Nursing



**DR. NAAMA ASSAYAG**  
Department of Occupational  
Therapy



**PROF. MAYA BAR**  
Department of Life Sciences



**DR. CHAIM BASKIN**  
School of Electrical and  
Computer Engineering



**DR. SHAFIR BOTNER**  
Department of Emergency  
Medicine



**DR. SOFIA BOUCHEBTI**  
Swiss Institute for Dryland  
Environmental and Energy  
Research



**DR. LIMOR COHEN**  
Department of Nursing

"The idea of a university  
rooted in the desert,  
situated among diverse  
and vibrant populations  
and cultures, combining  
academic excellence  
with social engagement,  
captivated and inspired me."

DR. EINAT VEGER-ATIAS



**PROF. ZIV COJOCARU**  
Department of Arts



**DR. ITAMAR DUBINSKY**  
Department of Politics  
and Government



**DR. ADI EFAL  
LAUTENSCHLAEGER**  
Department of Philosophy



**DR. BASMA FAHOUM**  
Department of Middle East  
Studies



**DR. DANIEL FUKS**  
Department of Bible Studies,  
Archeology and the Ancient  
Near East



**PROF. NOAM GOLDBERG**  
Department of Industrial  
Engineering and Management



**PROF. MICHAL GRINSTEIN-WEISS**  
Department of Management



**DR. YOTAM HENDEL**  
Department of Mathematics



**DR. TODOR KOEV**  
Conrad and Chinita  
Abrahams-Curiel  
Department of Foreign  
Literatures and Linguistics

"The solutions to the challenges we face today don't lie in just one approach or another, but in combining different disciplines and methods."

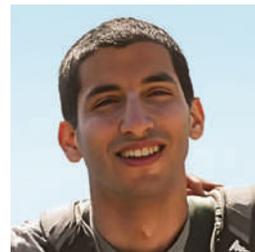
DR. AYAL TAITLER



**DR. ARIEL KULIK**  
Department of Industrial  
Engineering and  
Management



**DR. KHAWLA LOUBANI**  
Department of Occupational  
Therapy



**DR. ELIYAHU NACHMANI**  
School of Electrical and  
Computer Engineering



**DR. INBAL LIVNI NAVON**  
Department of Computer  
Science



**DR. AMNON ROTHMAN**  
Department of Materials  
Engineering



**DR. ITAY SAFRAN**  
Department of Computer  
Science



**DR. KINERET SHARFI**  
Department of Occupational  
Therapy



**DR. YANIV SHLOSBERG**  
Swiss Institute for Dryland  
Environmental and Energy  
Research



**DR. NICOLLE SIMONOVIC**  
Department of Nursing



**DR. AYAL TAITLER**  
Department of Industrial  
Engineering and  
Management



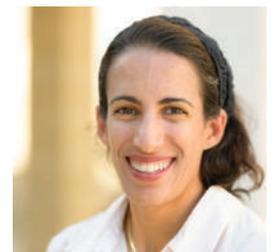
**DR. YEVGENY TSODIKOVICH**  
Department of Economics

"No matter which path you take, the most important thing is that you're on it, and it's up to you how the journey unfolds"

DR. KHAWLA LOUBANI



**DR. EINAT VEGER ATIAS**  
Charlotte B. and Jack J.  
Spitzer Department of  
Social Work



**DR. YAEL SHMARYAHU  
YESHURUN**  
Department of Politics  
and Government





# DONOR RECOGNITION 2024-25

[For Our Full  
Donor Recognition  
Website>>](#)

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev is deeply grateful for the generosity of our friends and supporters around the world. We are honored to recognize new members of our donor societies from the past year.\*

Your contributions – large and small – have been instrumental in strengthening our resilience and supporting our students in the aftermath of October 7.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to becoming a global leader in research and education while driving the regeneration of the Negev. Your partnership and belief in BGU's mission have never been more vital.

## PRESIDENT'S PILLARS

Prof. Richard Freedman, United States  
Joseph, Wolf and Harry Lebovic, Canada  
Edmond De Rothschild Foundation, Israel

## BEN-GURION SOCIETY

Gottesman DeBode Family, New York, NY  
KKL-JNF  
Keren Kayemeth Lelsrael-Jewish National Fund  
UJA-Federation of New York  
David Weinstock, NYC - a Survivor & Friend of Israel

## NEGEV SOCIETY

### TAMAR

Dame Vivien Duffield and the Clore Israel Foundation  
Granowitz Family Foundation, Morristown, New Jersey  
Arline and Ben Guefen, Houston, TX  
Barbara Heller and Michael Karton, Vancouver, Canada  
Ira and Eileen Ingerman Family Foundation, USA  
The Klarman Family Foundation, Boston, MA  
Yosef and Carmela Klein Family Foundation  
Diane Lynn Family Foundation, Boca Raton, FL  
Isidore & Penny Myers Foundation, Newport Beach, CA  
Mitchell & Naomi Oelbaum, Toronto, Canada  
Prosserman Family in honour and in memory of Dr. Vivian  
Rakoff z"l, Sir Aaron Klug z"l, and Dr. Adam Klug z"l  
Jack Shaio Ph.D. son of Soli Shaio, z"l  
Friedrich Turtel, Ashdod, Israel  
Dan, Gina, Noah and Josh Waldman Family, Tiburon, CA  
Phil and Cees Wynn  
Wynn Family Charitable Foundation, Toronto, Canada

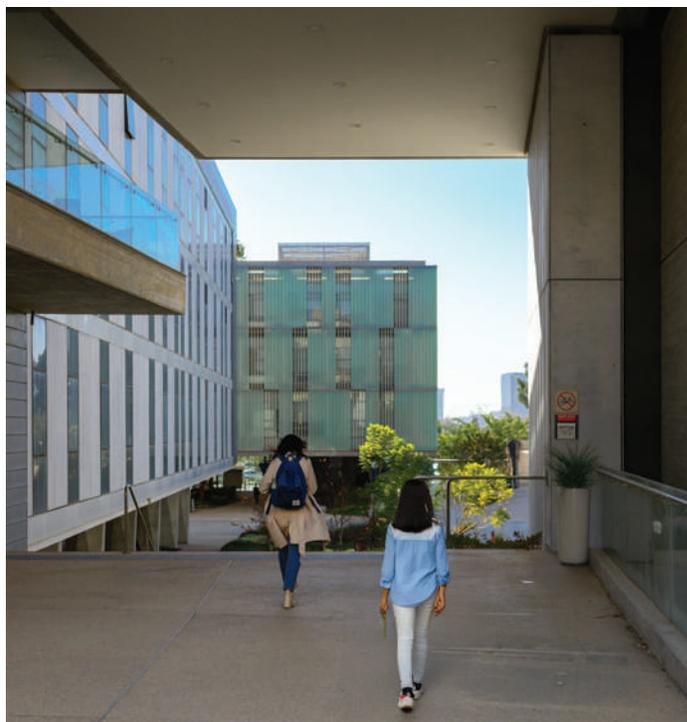
### ARAVA

Terri, Bruce, Sarah and Rachel Alpert, Madison, CT  
The Nathan, Anne, Kim and Julian Geller Foundation  
Melinda Goldrich/Goldrich Family Foundation

Ina and Lewis Heafitz, Boston, MA  
The Kennedy Leigh Charitable Trust, London, UK  
Hyman Jebb Levy Foundation, Los Angeles, CA  
Takeji Otsuki Mizra Association, Beit Shalom, Japan  
NVIDIA  
In Loving Memory of Menucha and Volff Rubanenko  
Drs. Mona and Alton Sutnick, Philadelphia, PA  
In memory of Herman & Gussie Taylor, Arlene Treegoob

### ESHKOL

Felicia and Arnold Aaron Foundation, Montreal, Canada  
Ginevra & Ladislao Bergamo z"l, Toronto, Canada  
Eric Beutel and Deborah Siegel, Toronto, Canada  
The Irwin Beutel Foundation, Montreal, Canada





The Paul Bronfman Family Foundation, Toronto, Canada  
 The Michael & David Cape Foundation, Montreal, Canada  
 Peggi Cohen Rabinovitch and Dr. Mark Rabinovitch,  
 Montreal, Canada  
 David and Risa Dulberg, Toronto, Canada  
 David Falk, Palm Springs, CA  
 Sandra and Steven Finkelman, Houston, TX  
 Michael MJ Fischer & Susann Wilkinson, Somerville MA  
 Linda Frum & Howard Sokolowski, Toronto, Canada  
 Sharon and Herbert Glaser, Beverly Hills, CA  
 A Jacobo, Jeannette y Juan de Fam. Goldberg Crenier  
 Dawn and Gary Guthart, Los Altos, CA  
 Eleanor M. and Herbert D. Katz Family Foundation, FL  
 Lee and Martin Katz, Menlo Park, CA  
 The Second Joseph Aaron Littman Foundation, UK  
 Debra & David Magerman, Merion Station & Jerusalem  
 Roslyn Margles, Montreal, Canada  
 Sallie Needles & Family, Jenkintown, PA  
 Harold, Judith, Jonathan and Guy Paisner, London, UK  
 Tobey Roland, Baltimore, MD  
 William and Renee Rothmann, San Francisco, CA  
 Sherrie R. Savett & Family, Bryn Mawr, PA  
 Peritz and Chantal Scheinberg, MDs, Miami Beach, FL  
 Science Training Encouraging Peace, Brookline, MA

David Shamash, England  
 Melvin Stern and Merna Wagshal, Bethesda, MD  
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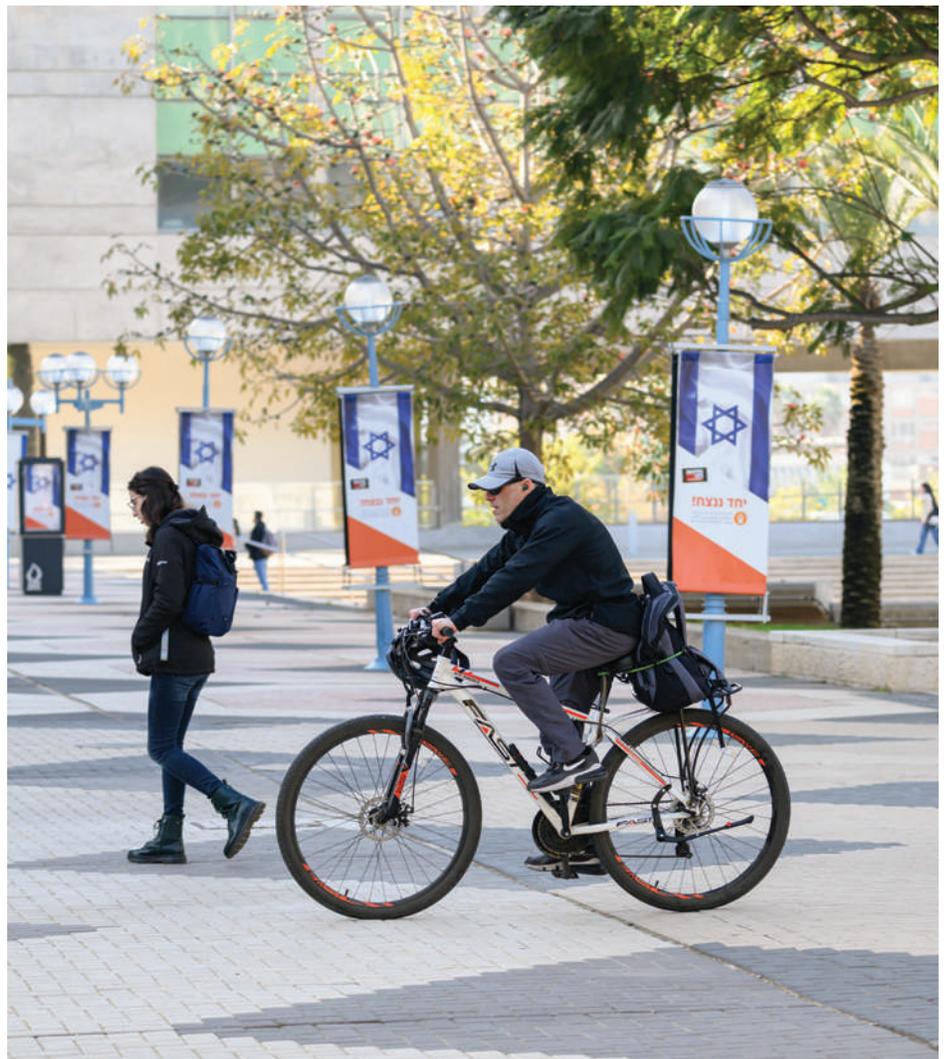
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