IMPACT REPORT
NOVEMBER 2025

אוניברסיטת חיפה
UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA
جامعة حيفا

UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

Driving Impact Towards the SDGs

CONTENTS

SDG 1: NO POVERTY 4

SDG 2: ZERO HUNGER 6

SDG 3: GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 8

SDG 4: QUALTY EDUCATION 10

SDG 5: GENDER EQUALITY 12

SDG 6: CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 14

SDG 7: AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 16

SDG 8: DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 18

SDG 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 20

SDG 10: REDUCED INEQUALITIES 22

SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 24

SDG 12: RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION 26

SDG 13: CLIMATE ACTION 28

SDG 14: LIFE BELOW WATER 30

SDG 15: LIFE ON LAND 32

SDG 16: PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 34

SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 36

DRIVING IMPACT

This annual report is written against the backdrop of an ongoing national crisis. Since October 7, 2023—when Hamas launched a brutal, unprovoked attack on Israel, followed by Hizballah's assault from the north—the country has endured two years of war under *Operation Iron Swords*. The conflict has exacted a profound human, social, and economic toll, leaving entire communities in the south and north displaced and in recovery.

During this period, the University of Haifa —an institution deeply rooted in the region—swiftly mobilized to assist victims of the war and, as the situation evolved, assumed a leading role in revitalizing Israel's North. Notably, the University of Haifa has taken upon itself a major mission: to lead the #HomeAgain fundraising campaign dedicated entirely to supporting applied research aimed at assisting and rebuilding the North. Drawing on our faculty's research, knowledge, and expertise, the University has been deeply engaged in rebuilding affected communities through data-driven, community-based initiatives.

Despite these immense challenges, the University has remained firmly committed to its mission of excellence in research, teaching, and societal engagement. We have continued to advance impactful scholarships and to provide our students with high-quality academic experience. Our dedication to contributing solutions to global challenges has not wavered.

This commitment is reflected in the University of Haifa's achievements in the 2024 *Times Higher Education Impact Rankings*, where we placed among the top 150 universities worldwide and maintained our position as Israel's leader in sustainability. With over 2,400 participating universities, this recognition highlights our sustained focus on advancing the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The University achieved particularly notable success in specific SDGs:

- **SDG 4: Quality Education** – ranked 56th globally
- **SDG 5: Gender Equality** – ranked 26th globally
- **SDG 14: Life Below Water** – ranked 27th globally

We have continued promoting interdisciplinary and socially relevant research through our *Impact Project* grant program, which supports the translation of scholarly knowledge into practical solutions for societal and environmental challenges. This year's six winning projects exemplify cross-sector collaboration and focus on supporting the recovery and sustainable growth of northern Israel. Similarly, our *Impactful Education* initiative continues to encourage innovative teaching and community engagement. The five winning programs from this year's competition successfully integrate academic excellence with public engagement.

In addition, this year we launched our *Sustainable Campus* initiative, and invited proposals from across the University community for projects to make our campus greener and more sustainable. Three projects were selected for implementation, including a home biogas hydroponic system and the planning of a campus Green Trail, which will be open to both the University community and the public.

I am deeply proud of this report, which presents a selection of the University of Haifa's initiatives advancing the Sustainable Development Goals through our research, teaching, community partnerships, and institutional practices. With steadfast hope and determination, we continue to strengthen our contribution to society, to the region, and to a sustainable future for all.

Prof. Ofer Arazy

Director of Innovation & Sustainability

(Credit: Dr. Adir Adler)

1 NO POVERTY

END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

RESEARCH

Income Inequality in Israel

Prof. Meir Yaish of the Department of Sociology and a colleague, writing in *Sociology Compass*, examine how education shapes income inequality in society as diverse as Israel's. The review underscores the importance of adopting a long-term perspective when studying income inequality. It shows that wage disparities are dynamic, shifting over the life course and across groups, while returns on education are both significant and broadly similar among men and women, Jews and Arabs, Ashkenazi and Mizrahi Jews.

Gender, Ethnicity and Employment in the Public Sector in Israel

A new study published in *Advances in Life Course Research* by Dr. Assaf Lev-on, the late Prof. Vered Kraus, Mr. Evgeny Saborov and others, examines the role of gender and ethnicity in public sector employment in Israel. Using data from the Population Registry and tax authorities, the research reveals how the public sector acts as a vital tool for integrating women and ethno-religious minorities into the workforce. The findings underscore the importance of the public sector in promoting employment equality throughout Israeli society.

Student Village in Hadar (Credit: Student village Facebook page)

Wage Equality, Incentives, and Recruitment Policies

A new theoretical study by Professor Benjamin Bental of the Economics Department and a colleague, together published in the journal *Management Accounting Research*, examines the impact of collective agreements that mandate fixed wage equality on incentive contracts and recruitment policies. The research found that when the collective wage does not restrict the employer, fixed wage equality leads to equal bonuses.

Student Village in Hadar (Credit: Student village Facebook page)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Student Villages: Living and Contributing to the Community

Urban renewal in Haifa's Kiryat Eliezer and Hadar neighborhoods risks displacing longtime residents and disrupting community bonds. In response, student villages, created with 'Eretz Eer' (City Land) organization, offer a meaningful social framework that promotes activism, community engagement, and mutual responsibility. Selected students run educational and community programs for children, new immigrants, and seniors, fostering critical thinking and communal living while strengthening neighborhood ties.

OPERATIONS

Moshel Scholarship for Success

The Moshel Program is a private scholarship initiative by entrepreneur and high-tech executive Martin Moussaieff, enabling talented students from challenging economic backgrounds and without family support to reach their highest potential. This pluralistic program champions equal opportunities and welcomes students from all sectors, opinions, and beliefs in society. Program participants receive full tuition funding and living stipends, personal mentoring and professional workshops, career counseling, community membership, and experiential events.

Recycling and Donating Medicines

Israeli households often accumulate unused or expired medications. Improper disposal can harm health and pollute water sources, while donating surplus medicines supports vulnerable populations. To promote health and sustainability, the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences has placed bins in its building for recycling and donation.

Student Village in Hadar (Credit: Student village Facebook page)

END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

RESEARCH

Interpreting Food

A study by doctoral candidate Maram Saad, from the Behavioral Psychopathology Lab, and Prof. Noam Weinbach of the School of Psychological Sciences, explores how the way we interpret food shapes our desire to eat it. Published in *Appetite*, the research examined whether reinterpreting food not only reduces appetite but also negatively affects mood. While cognitive reframing of food can be a powerful tool, it also resembles strategies found in eating disorders, where individuals attempt to control eating through inducing negative emotions.

Food for (Smarter) Thought

Eating too much ultra-processed food in midlife may raise the risk of Alzheimer's later on, according to a study led by Prof. Galit Weinstein from the School of Public Health and Boston University, published in *The Journal of Prevention of Alzheimer's Disease*. Prof. Weinstein emphasizes the importance of choosing healthy, balanced foods early in life—not just for overall well-being, but also to protect brain function as we age.

Food Rescue Course (Credit: The School of Arts, Culture & Hermeneutics Facebook page)

Hunger Hurts: Food Insecurity Linked to Global Liver Disease

A global study led by Prof. Shira Zelber-Sagi from the School of Public Health, published in *the Journal of Hepatology*, reveals a link between food insecurity and the prevalence and mortality of metabolic dysfunction–associated fatty liver disease (MASLD). The research highlights geographic disparities in disease rates and outcomes, underscoring the need for country-specific health policies that address local socio-economic conditions. Improving access to diagnosis, healthy food, and physical activity is key to tackling the growing burden of liver disease worldwide.

Too Much on the Plate: Tackling Food Waste in Israeli Hotels

A study by PhD student Gabriela Appel, Prof. Ofira Ayalon, and Prof. Noga Collins, from the School of Environmental Sciences, published in the *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, found that food waste at Israeli hotel breakfasts is driven mainly by guest behavior, overproduction, and lavish presentation. The research calls for targeted policies to reduce waste in the hospitality industry.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Israeli Research at the EU Parliament

Prof. Shira Zelber-Sagi, a leading liver disease expert from the School of Public Health, presented her research to the European Parliament. She highlighted fatty liver disease as a preventable condition linked to environmental factors, food insecurity, and harmful commercial influences promoting processed, sugary foods. Prof. Zelber-Sagi stressed the need for policies that create health-supportive environments.

A Decade Inside Israel's Health Ministry

In an interview with *The Marker*, Prof. Ronit Endevelt from the School of Public Health reflected on her 10 years as head of nutrition at Israel's Ministry of Health. During her tenure, she confronted unhealthy eating habits, lobbyists, and political pressures. Looking ahead, she sees food and sustainability as the key issue—calling for regulation that supports both public health and the planet.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Art Meets Action: Raising Food Waste Awareness on Campus

A multidisciplinary course led by Ruti Sela, supported by the Innovation and Sustainability Unit, used art to raise awareness about food waste. The project culminated in a student exhibition at the Arts Center, aiming to engage students, university visitors, and local aid organizations in the conversation around food rescue and sustainability.

New M.A. Program: Nutrition, Health & Behavior

The School of Public Health offers a unique M.A. program in Nutrition, Health, and Behavior. The program emphasizes the integration of nutritional care with behavioral, emotional, social, and family dynamics. Its distinct focus lies in understanding the psychological and behavioral aspects of nutrition, and their role in the causes, prevention, and treatment of health conditions.

Cooking as Therapy

The Continuing Education Unit at the Faculty of Welfare and Health now offers *Cooking as a Therapeutic Tool*—a course for therapists seeking to expand their practice. Through intuitive, everyday kitchen activities, participants explore emotions, face challenges, and foster meaningful connections in a creative therapeutic setting.

Food Rescue Course (Credit: The School of Arts, Culture & Hermeneutics)

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

RESEARCH

New Diabetes Drugs May Lower Dementia Risk

A study led by research student Avi Cohen, Prof. Steven Levine, and Prof. Galit Weinstein from the School of Public Health found that newer diabetes medications for type 2 are linked to a 31% reduced risk of dementia in people aged 65 and older. Published in *The Journal of Prevention of Alzheimer's Disease*, the study compared advanced drugs with traditional treatments like insulin and metformin.

How the Brain Learns to Control the Immune System

A study published by the University of Haifa and Technion in *Nature Neuroscience*, shows that the brain can regulate immune activity through learning processes similar to associative learning. Led by Prof. Kobi Rosenblum's lab and researchers Dr. Haneen Kayyal, PhD student Federica Cruciani, and Dr. Sailendrakumar Kolatt Chandran, the findings reveal brain-immune cooperation that prepares the body for future challenges and explain how sensory information, like taste, can influence immune responses.

Sunset at the Carmel Park (Credit: Dr. Adir Adler)

Positive Communication Doubles Pain Relief Effectiveness

Prof. Roy Treister from the Nursing Department found that positive communication from medical staff during pain medication administration doubles the drugs' effectiveness. Published in *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, the study, conducted with Carmel and Ziv Medical Centers, showed significant pain reduction and less use of strong painkillers thanks to simple verbal encouragement—an easy, resource-free way to improve patient care.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Finding Their Voice: Dream. Speak. Live.

Children and teens aged 4–17 who stutter took part in *"Dream. Speak. Live."*, a summer camp held in July at the University of Haifa. Led by certified speech-language pathologists and students from the Department of Communication Disorders, the program—developed by the Blank Center for Stuttering Education and Research at the University of Texas—uses the CARE model (Communication, Advocacy, Resilience, Education). Participants found a supportive community, built vital skills, and gained empowering tools for daily life.

Growing Stronger: Emotional Support for Teens

A unique collaboration between the University's Clinical Center of the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, led by Dr. Keren Or-Chen, and the Reali School has launched a new branch for emotional therapy for adolescents at the Beit Biram campus. The meetings serve as a platform for sharing professional knowledge and foster open, collaborative dialogue between experts and the school's parent community.

Partnering for the Health of All

A pioneering program is fostering research partnerships between the University's Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences and Clalit Health Services in Haifa and the Western Galilee. The initiative aims to support competitive grant applications and promote multidisciplinary research across health and welfare fields.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

The Science of Happiness

Dozens of participants attended the Clinical Interdisciplinary Center's study day on *"Happiness Amid the Reality of War."* The event marked the launch of the Center's new *Unit for the Science of Happiness*, led by Dr. Keren Or-Chen. Leading professionals took part in sessions exploring happiness and personal well-being, Israeli society's growth in the aftermath of October 7, strategies for fostering personal resilience, and ways to strengthen interpersonal relationships.

The Brain at the Center

The Center for Brain and Behavior, the University's multidisciplinary hub for neuroscience research, has launched four new undergraduate study tracks designed to deepen knowledge and research in brain sciences: Psychology and Biology with an emphasis on Neuroscience; Psychology and Cognition with an emphasis on Neuroscience; Biophysics with a specialization in Neuroscience; and Statistics and Psychology in Brain Sciences. These programs join a broad range of existing study paths, from undergraduate to postdoctoral levels.

When Specializations Meet

The School of Public Health held "*When Specializations Meet*," an event uniting students from Health Promotion, Health Systems Management, and Administration. Through roundtables, role-playing, and debates, participants shared diverse perspectives, deepened understanding of public health challenges, and highlighted the value of interdisciplinary collaboration.

OPERATIONS

Health Leaders

The first cohort of the *"Faculty Leadership Program"* has launched, led by Prof. Efrat Shadmi and Ms. Pninit Tal. The program aims to develop leadership skills among the academic and administrative staff of the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences. As part of the program, participants held a study tour in Jerusalem, meeting with representatives of the CHE and PBC, discussing topics such as budget structure, strategic planning, and internationalization, and visiting the new National Library building.

Resilience Podcast

The University of Haifa's Resilience Center, in partnership with the Rothschild Foundation and the Israel Trauma Center, has launched a new Spotify podcast on loss, resilience, and coping with crisis. The series explores questions of grief and acceptance, highlights the role of community in supporting bereaved families, and invites compassionate listening. The Center also provides tailored support for stress and trauma to students, faculty, and staff.

Shaping the Future of Nursing

During International Nurses Week, the Azrieli Foundation announced a landmark $10 million gift to the University of Haifa for the establishment of the *Azrieli Advanced Nursing Center*. One of the largest contributions ever made to an Israeli academic institution in the field of nursing, the gift will support advanced training and research, promote technological innovation, and help integrate advanced nursing roles into Israel's healthcare system.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

RESEARCH

Excellence Recognized Worldwide

The University of Haifa achieved exceptional results in global rankings. Its School of Archaeology and Maritime Cultures ranked **1st in Israel** and among the **world's top 150** (QS 2025), offering unique programs in land, sea, lab, and heritage archaeology.

In the **2024 Shanghai Ranking**, the University excelled across disciplines: **Public Administration and Policy** ranked **41st worldwide (1st in Israel)**, **Communication Studies 28th globally (2nd nationally)**, and it placed among the **top 150** in **Law, Political Science, and Sociology**, and the **top 200** in **Nursing, Education, and Psychology**.

Among the World's Most-Cited in Science Education

An article by Prof. Yael Kali and Dr. Osnat Atias of the Department of Learning and Instructional Sciences, together with colleagues from the Technion, was selected as one of the **ten most-cited articles of 2023** in *Science Education*. Their research explores the integration of schools into citizen science projects, examining how teachers and scientists perceive their collaboration. The findings highlight the potential to reshape power relations between education and academia, strengthening the role of teachers and students as partners in generating scientific knowledge.

University for Senior Citizens (Credit: University of Haifa)

Academic Motivation Shapes Classroom Friendships

A new study by Dr. Ela Hemi, published in the *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, shows that students who aim to learn and improve build stronger, closer friendships and connect peers, while those driven by fear of failure form fewer ties. The findings highlight the importance of positive learning goals for both academic success and healthy social integration.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The MIND program (MAOF in Hebrew), designed for middle school students, develops mathematical literacy and real-world problem-solving while fostering 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and perseverance. Led by Prof. Roza Leikin, Dean of the Faculty of Education, it is part of the Hamah Center, which advances research and programs dedicated to creativity, excellence, and gifted education.

The Golden Age of Learning

The Senior Citizens' University program offers citizens aged 60 and above the opportunity to study university courses across a variety of fields. It was founded through the initiative of the University of Haifa's Division of Continuing Education, the Haifa Municipality's Authority for Older Adults, the University's Interdisciplinary Clinical Center, and in collaboration with the international *Age Friendly University (AFU)* initiative.

IDEA Program for Outstanding Youth

In collaboration with the Maimonides Foundation's Center for Future Scientists and the Ministry of Education, the University of Haifa operates the *IDEA Program*—a prestigious research initiative in the humanities. Designed for gifted and outstanding 9th-grade students, the program guides participants in their first steps into academic research across the fields of humanities, social sciences, and the arts.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Pitch Your PhD

The fifth conference of the Graduate Studies Authority and the Bloom School's Doctoral Fellows Program opened with a keynote lecture by Judge Dr. Ron Shapira, President of the Haifa District Court and graduate of the Faculty of Law's doctoral program, on the importance of interdisciplinary education. The event featured dynamic activities, a poster session, and a spotlight on the diverse and groundbreaking research of students through a "Three-Minute Thesis"–style competition.

Opening Doors: Arab Men in Academia

A learning day, initiated by the Edmond de Rothschild Foundation and led by Dr. Marian Tehawkho, focused on promoting the integration of Arab men in higher education. The event gathered academics, policymakers, and educators to discuss new research on three critical stages: achievements before age 18, entry into academia, and completion of a bachelor's degree. Rector Prof. Mouna Maroun reaffirmed the University's commitment to equality and opportunity for all.

OPERATIONS

New Advanced Counseling Center

A new counseling center for prospective students have opened, equipped with advanced technologies and staffed by the professional and dedicated team of the Marketing and Communications Division. The center is ready to answer questions and provide guidance throughout the decision-making and enrollment process.

Doctoral Writing Retreat – Inspiration, Research, Community

A two-day writing retreat for the University's Doctoral Fellows was held on campus, organized by the Bloom Graduate School with the President's and Rector's Offices. Fourteen researchers from various faculties took part in writing sessions and shared practice. Led by doctoral students, the event highlighted the fellows' role in fostering young researchers, as noted by Prof. Michal Biran, the program's academic head.

New Teaching Labs for Undergrads

This year, a new teaching lab complex opened in the Madrega Building, housing all the laboratories required for undergraduate studies in Biology and Medical Sciences—chemistry, biochemistry, genetics, and microbiology. The labs are designed to train students in proper laboratory practices, introduce them to essential experimental techniques, and bring classroom learning to life through hands-on experience.

5 GENDER EQUALITY

ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

RESEARCH

Addressing Sexual Violence Against Men

A new study by Prof. Ateret Gvrietz-Maydan, head of the Sexuality Research Lab at the School of Social Work, focuses on sexual violence against men and the urgent need for tailored responses. The project was awarded funding under the 2024 Impact Call, and its findings were recently featured on YNET. Of 405 participants, only 5% sought recognition from the National Insurance Institute or joined support groups; 36% did not know where to turn for help, and 83% felt there was little public awareness of the issue.

Proud Pioneers

A two-decade study by Prof. Yuval Yonay of the Department of Sociology preserves the life stories of LGBTQ+ veterans in Israel. Through 214 interviews, Prof. Yonay documents the dramatic social transformation—from a time when the term "gay" was scarcely known, to the founding of the Association for Civil Rights in 1975 and the first pride marches in the late 1970s.

New Graduate of the University (Credit: University of Haifa)

Coping with Intimate Partner Violence in Arab Society in Israel

A joint study by the University of Haifa and the University of Michigan, published in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, explored how Palestinian women citizens of Israel cope with intimate partner violence. Using a clinical ethnographic narrative approach, the researchers examined how women from traditional, collectivist societies understand coping and recovery. Led by doctoral student Nihal Madhat Najmi and Prof. Limor Goldner from the School of Creative Arts Therapies, together with Prof. Rachel Lev-Wiesel from the School of Social Work, the study underscores the importance of culturally informed approaches to healing and intervention.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Next Generation of Women in Science

The University of Haifa Youth Program hosted *Future Women Scientists*, a joint initiative with the Branco Weiss Institute and the University's Center for Brain and Behavior, designed to inspire outstanding ninth-grade girls to pursue science and technology. During two days on campus, participants attended lectures, explored genetic engineering and biochemistry in university labs, joined art-and-biology workshops, visited the Hecht Museum, and met leading women researchers who shared their paths in academia.

Remarkable Women at the University of Haifa

The University of Haifa is proudly celebrating several distinguished women recognized for their leadership, innovation, and academic excellence.
Prof. Ofira Ayalon, from the School of Environmental Sciences, was selected by *Calcalist* as one of the women shaping Israel in 2025.
Prof. Mouna Maroun, Rector of the University, was named among Israel's *50 Most Influential Women* for 2025.
Prof. Dana Amir, from the Department of Counseling and Human Development, received the prestigious 2025 *Hyman Prize* from the International Psychoanalytical Association for her groundbreaking research on trauma and healing.
Prof. Nizan Geslevich Packin, from the Faculty of Law, was elected to the *European Corporate Governance Institute (ECGI)*, recognizing her international standing and scholarly contributions.
Dr. Maayan Sudai, also from the Faculty of Law, received the 2025 *Aharon Barak Prize for Young Legal Scholars* honoring her exceptional research in law.

Women in Cyber: Changing the Statistics

Marking International Women's Day, *the Center for Cyber, Law and Policy* hosted a special webinar highlighting trailblazing women in cybersecurity.
Prof. Irit Hadar, Head of the Center, and Dr. Dalit Ken-Dror Feldman, its Scientific Director, noted that women make up only about 20% of Israel's cybersecurity workforce—mostly in supporting roles. "Cyber is not just technology," they said, "it's a space for influence and innovation." The event called for promoting women's leadership and training the next generation of female experts.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Women Shaping Health

The School of Public Health hosted *Women Rewriting Health*, a conference promoting innovation and gender awareness in healthcare. Discussions focused on advancing women's health, improving access to services for at-risk populations, and exploring gender impacts on psychology and well-being. The event emphasized the importance of including women's perspectives in health research, policy, and practice.

"Leshama" Program – Empowering and Advancing Haredi Women

The "Leshama" Program is a leadership and training program for senior Haredi women, run in partnership between the School of Political Science and the Commission for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The fourth cohort, launched last year, included 15 women in management roles across education, technology, finance, marketing, entrepreneurship, development, and health, representing the northern region of Israel.

Woman's Job

A symposium titled "*Women as Agents of Change: From Crisis to Growth*" explored female and community resilience in times of crisis. Organized by the Commission for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the Interdisciplinary Clinical Center, and the Haifa Mayor's Advisor for Women's Advancement, the event highlighted how collaboration between academia and the community can foster resilience and growth, emphasizing women's personal, communal, and leadership strengths.

OPERATIONS

Gender-Neutral Writing Workshop

The Commission for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion organized an innovative, hands-on workshop providing practical tools for gender-neutral and inclusive writing. The program helps participants improve their writing skills while understanding how language impacts gender equality.

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL

RESEARCH

Designing Solutions for Flood Management

An impact project led by researchers from the School of Environmental Sciences and the Department of Information Systems examined water management challenges in Israel under climate change. Published in *Sustainability*, the study applied a design thinking approach to explore organizational complexities in flood management. Findings revealed major barriers to implementing solutions, including poor interagency communication, unclear responsibilities, conflicting guidelines, and limited resources. The study underscores the need for cross-sector collaboration and shared understanding of challenges prior to technological development.

Assessing Stream Health in Arid Regions through Ecosystem Services

A new study by PhD candidate Ms. Geula Michael-Biton, Prof. Boris Platonov, and their colleague introduces an innovative index for evaluating stream health based on the ecosystem services streams provide—such as biodiversity support, water purification, flood prevention, and ecotourism. Developed to address the need for a simple yet accurate assessment tool for water-scarce regions, the index draws on professional literature, expert interviews, and surveys. This is the first study to use ecosystem services as a metric for a stream's health in arid climates, offering a practical tool for decision-makers involved in ecological planning and restoration.

Students House Building (Credit: Lea Mussay)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

From Data to Flow: AI in Water Management

Prof. Mashor Housh from the School of Environmental Sciences led a unique workshop for engineers and managers of water corporations nationwide, in collaboration with the Continuing Education Unit and the Water Engineers Forum. The workshop focused on AI-based tools to enhance efficiency, sustainability, and smart management of Israel's water systems, combining cutting-edge academic knowledge with practical field experience. This integration of theory and practice aims to produce tangible improvements in water management and overall quality of life.

Real-World Environmental Justice in Action

Members of the Environmental Justice Clinic toured environmental hazards in Haifa related to the Clinic's practical projects, including the Saadia Brook and the Bat Galim Casino site. The tour exposed students to existing environmental challenges and introduced them to residents actively engaged in public advocacy, highlighting the critical role of the Clinic in strengthening the legal fronts of these community struggles.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Field Study Tour in Israel's Valleys

The Environmental Justice Clinic organized a study tour in the Beit She'an and Jordan Valleys—the "backyard" of Israel. Participants met with environmental activists, including leaders of the campaign to restore the Asi Stream. The tour included a visit to a promenade along the southern Jordan River and provided insight into the challenges faced by decision-makers in managing water resources and balancing regional interests. Local council managers, wastewater authorities, the head of the Jordan Valley Regional Council, and the Water Authority's deputy director joined the tour, sharing perspectives on complex issues and fostering discussions for future collaborations on ecological restoration.

Dead Sea Campus: Exploring Hydrology, Geology, and Environmental Challenges

Dr. Elad Danta from the School of Environmental Sciences leads a course on the unique hydrological and geological history of the Dead Sea, alongside the major environmental issues that have emerged in recent decades. Topics include the Dead Sea basin water balance, salt and sediment deposition, floods, water deficit and declining levels, hydrological and landscape responses (e.g., sinkhole formation, stream incision, ground subsidence), potash industry operations, evaporation ponds, salt harvesting, the regional ecosystem, and approaches for the Dead Sea's future management.

OPERATIONS

Dishwashers for Water Conservation

The University of Haifa continues to promote a sustainable campus by advancing the use of reusable tableware and enabling departments to acquire small dishwashers. To date, approximately fifty *Freshcup* dishwashers have been purchased by the Sustainability and Innovation Unit and the Engineering and Operations Department, with further acquisitions planned.

Sustainable Landscaping at the University of Haifa

Landscaped areas cover 31% of the University of Haifa campus. The University's commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship is reflected in the organization and management of its landscaping. A sustainability and environment policy framework has been developed to guide landscaping practices, supporting and advancing a significant portion of the University's broader sustainability goals.

Green Campus Projects Winners

Two projects were awarded in the University of Haifa's "Green Campus" competition, organized by the Innovation and Sustainability Division in collaboration with the Engineering and Operations Department and the Human Resources Department. The first, led by Dr. Eli Shemesh (Department of Marine Biology) and Mr. Beni Vaknin (Evolution Institute), develops an aquaponics system for cultivating Tilapia fish and hydroponically grown herbs. The second, led by Dr. Yigal Bernstein (Department of Marine Biology), establishes a green corner integrating a closed-loop hydroponic system and a biogas system.

RESEARCH

Methane Emissions Calculations

Prof. Ofira Ayalon, along with other researchers, authored a report titled "Calculation of Methane Emissions from the Natural Gas Supply Chain," which was presented to Israeli authorities. The report provides a comprehensive assessment of methane emissions across the entire natural gas supply chain in Israel, encompassing extraction, processing, transportation, distribution, and end-use.

Promoting Environmental and Social Impact Locally

PhD candidate Sarah Malka-Or's research received funding through the 2025 call for impactful environmental and social projects, a key element of the University of Haifa's vision. With municipal waste landfilling rates in Israel particularly high and contributing to severe environmental pollution, Malka-Or, under the supervision of Prof. Ofira Ayalon and Prof. Ruslana Rachel Palatnik, is examining the economic feasibility of small-scale waste-to-energy facilities in local authorities. Her work aims to offer practical solutions for sustainable waste management and local energy recovery.

(Credit: Avia Das)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Solar Power Generation on University of Haifa Rooftops

At the University of Haifa's request, the feasibility report for generating electricity using photovoltaic panels on campus rooftops has been updated. The study, conducted by Gadir Engineering, evaluated different implementation options and assessed potential operational approaches.

Cleaning the Bay

Among the environmental issues addressed by the Environmental Justice Clinic is the longstanding challenge of industrial pollution in Haifa Bay. Adv. Inbar Druyan, director of the Clinic, participated in a meeting with activists, the chair of the Israeli Climate Forum, and city council members to discuss cleanup efforts in Haifa Bay and strategies for addressing various environmental hazards.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Energy Economics: Markets, Policy, and Sustainability

Prof. Ruslana Rachel Palatnik's course examines the role of energy in the economy, linking energy use to economic growth and environmental impact. Topics include renewable energy, global oil markets, and international energy policies, with analysis of energy taxation, price regulation, market efficiency, and policy tools across oil, gas, coal, and electricity sectors.

Mastering Environmental Intelligence

This international master's program in Natural Resources and Environmental Management integrates advanced data technologies with environmental science and management. Students learn to derive insights from big data—such as social media, remote sensing, and geographic information—using tools like machine learning and AI. The only program of its kind in Israel, it equips graduates to turn data into practical solutions for sustainability and informed environmental decision-making.

OPERATIONS

New Environmental and Safety Certifications

The University of Haifa has recently been awarded new certifications from the Standards Institution of Israel and the Ministry of Environmental Protection for its achievements in the following areas: Environmental Management System (ISO 14001), Occupational Health and Safety Management System (ISO 45001), and independent reporting of greenhouse gas emissions.

Project Management in Construction

The Human Resources Division initiated a professional course in project management for the construction sector, led by an instructor from the Israeli Center for Project Management. The course combined theoretical content, presentations, lectures, discussions, and simulations, and was attended by staff from the university's Engineering Division.

Simplifying Procurement

The Procurement and Contracts Division has launched a new procurement help desk to assist administrative and academic staff with purchasing processes. The new service aims to simplify and streamline procurement by helping locate suitable suppliers, find catalog items, and address other related inquiries.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL

View of the University of Haifa (Credit: University of Haifa)

RESEARCH

Public Service and Academia

Prof. Nissim Cohen of the School of Political Sciences, together with researchers from the Samuel Neaman Institute, recently authored a policy paper on strengthening collaboration between academia and the public sector and motivating students toward public service careers. The report includes a survey conducted with the State Service Student Committee, exploring career aspirations and perceived barriers.

Integration into High-Tech

A new study by Dr. Einat Lavi (Department of Human Services), Prof. Asaf Levanon, doctoral student Daria Gomelsky-Haiby (Department of Sociology), and Ms. Ruan Kaabia, a university alumna, identifies key barriers hindering Arab integration into Israel's high-tech sector. The findings show that college graduates—many of them Arab—are often seen as less attractive by recruiters and lack access to key professional networks. The study calls for targeted counseling, training, and mentoring to promote greater Arab representation in high-tech.

Economists in Labor Unions

Dr. Assaf Bondy from the Department of Human Services and his colleague published a study in *New Political Economy* examining the surprising rise of "economic professionalism" within the Histadrut, Israel's main labor federation. Despite neoclassical economics' skepticism toward labor market intervention, this trend has led to a new approach in negotiations—less political and more market-oriented, emphasizing collective agreements grounded in economic logic.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Graduates Finding Their Path

The first cohort of the "Finding Your Path" (Tofsim Kivun) program has begun, led by the Career Development Center in the Student Dean's Office in collaboration with Migdalor and Education for Peaks. The program, designed for university graduates, provides practical tools for entering the workforce, including guidance from a personal mentor to help build a career trajectory.

Alumni Club Launch

The School of Public Health has launched an alumni club for its Health Administration and Health Systems Management programs. The club aims to strengthen connections with graduates and create new professional opportunities. At the inaugural meeting, participants discussed the club's role in fostering professional networking, knowledge sharing, and community building, as well as alumni contributions to advancing public health, opportunities for collaboration, and future initiatives.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Mastering Job Interviews and Selection Processes

As part of the "Rave Ravid" program, students attended a workshop on interview and selection skills, gaining tools to build confidence and showcase their professional value. Prof. Yair Sagy also lectured on "Constitutional Dilemmas," enhancing students' theoretical and practical understanding of academic and professional challenges.

The Executive Salon

A unique series connecting students with senior leaders from various sectors. Faculty from the Business School host top executives for in-depth conversations about professional experience, management challenges, and personal perspectives. Following the discussion, the audience is invited to join the conversation and ask questions.

Internship in Public Relations and Communications

As part of the "Accelerating Careers" program, a joint initiative with the Rothschild Center connecting graduates to employment, students from the Communication Department will intern in the University's public relations and communications team within a digital marketing incubator led by Mr. Ze'ev Yanai.

OPERATIONS

Academic Fashion and Design

The Continuing Education Unit inaugurated a new fashion space on the 600th floor, showcasing students from "Fashion as a Profession." Following a merger with WIZO Academic Center, the unit now offers a wide range of courses—from graphic and interior design to photography, drawing, and AI-assisted design—making it the most comprehensive and innovative program available.

Professional Skills Training

The Career Development Center in the Student Dean's Office provides professional training for students on the city campus. Students from the Information Systems and Computer Science departments participated in a Linux training course and a workshop on writing technology-focused CVs, led by career counselor and psychologist Ms. Adi Shafrai.

A Seminar to Remember

Staff from the Operations Division participated in an empowering seminar in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, organized under the guidance of Ms. Bracha Zimmerman, Chair of the Administrative Staff Union, and the social-professional development organization "Shachar On." During the visit, participants were exposed to the local culture and the remarkable development of the United Arab Emirates from the last century to the present.

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION

RESEARCH

Trading Apps: Investment or Addiction?

A study by Prof. Nizan Geslevich Packin, Dr. Sharon Rabinovitz Shankar, Prof. Amnon Reichman (Faculty of Law), and Prof. Doron Kliger (Department of Economics) examined digital trading apps that use gamification techniques similar to gambling to encourage repeated use and higher investments, particularly among young users with limited financial literacy. The research calls for new regulations to reduce addictive elements and raise awareness of the associated risks.

AI Detects Pain in Sheep

Researchers from the Tech4Animals Lab, led by Prof. Anna Zamansky, Dr. Marcelo Feighelstein, and Prof. Ilan Shimshoni (Department of Information Systems), developed an AI model that detects pain in sheep with 82% accuracy—compared to just 71% using traditional veterinary assessments. Published in *Scientific Reports*, the study marks a breakthrough in animal welfare through more precise diagnosis and exemplifies the University of Haifa's commitment to combining academic research with applied innovation as part of its "Connected University" vision.

The Reuben Hecht Museum (Credit: Hecht Museum Facebook page)

Early Detection of Depression with AI

Following rising depression rates in northern Israel due to recent security events, the digital tool *Digilton* was developed to identify early symptoms. Led by Prof. Sigal Zilcha-Mano, Dr. Eyal Levy, and PhD student Michal Malka, the project tests the tool's effectiveness for vulnerable populations and supports the use of digital solutions in mental health care. It received funding from the Innovation and Sustainability Unit for impactful research.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

From High School to a Scientific Journal

A four-year journey by outstanding high school students from *Shcha'kim* in Nahariya culminated in the publication of their research in *Astrobiology*. As part of the Ramon SpaceLab program by the Ramon Foundation, the students—mentored by Dr. Amir Sapir (Department of Biology and Environment) and Prof. Ioram Gershman (Institute of Evolution)—developed a unique experimental system to study the effects of space travel on neurodegenerative diseases, tested aboard an international space station.

From Academia to the Field

A unique conference initiated by the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and *Carmel – The Economic Company*, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the defense system, health funds, foundations, and field organizations, focused on linking research, entrepreneurship, and community in mental health. Such initiatives create connections between industry and academia, bridging applied academic research with Israel's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Scholarships for Community-Engaged Students

The Social Engagement Unit in the Student Dean's Office hosted a ceremony awarding scholarships from the Ministry of Innovation, Science, and Technology. The scholarships recognized students participating in the Rona Ramon Scientific Mentoring Program and the *HiTechClass* program. In the mentoring program, students support schoolchildren in Haifa and the surrounding area through tutoring, while *HiTechClass* equips students with 21st-century skills for careers in high-tech. The University was commended for its productive collaboration with the Ministry and its strong support for students and the community.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Accelerating Innovation

Thirteen promising projects have advanced to the second stage of the Innovation Lab's accelerator program after a successful ideation phase. The projects span diverse fields, including mental health, sustainability, education, and technology. The Innovation Lab offers two open incubation programs: one in health and welfare, in collaboration with Clalit Health Services and Carmel Hospital, and another in marine environment and blue economy, in partnership with the Leon Charney School of Marine Sciences.

Impactful Hackathon

A student team won the "Most Impactful Solution" award at the HealthTech Hackathon for developing an advanced self-assessment system for chronic pain, reducing the need for unnecessary surgeries and medications. The event united Israeli and Palestinian participants, demonstrating how technology can advance health while fostering collaboration and empathy.

Docking Stations at the Museum

A new collaboration between the School of Design and the Hecht Museum resulted in students' exhibition of *Docking Stations*. Students in the 3D Design and Technology course showcased works inspired by the museum's longstanding exhibition *The Phoenicians on the Northern Coast of Israel in the Biblical Period*.

OPERATIONS

Employment for All

The City Campus technology job fair connected students in Information Systems and Computer Science with 14 companies, while a Carmel Campus fair, in collaboration with Haifa Municipality, featured 80 employers offering positions to students across all faculties.

Easy Travel Reporting

A new user-friendly system streamlines international travel expense reporting, simplifying document submission, reducing printing, supporting remote work, and speeding up reimbursement while promoting environmental sustainability.

Connected

The University's PhD team, under the Authority for Advanced Studies, hosted a roundtable event to expose graduate students to academic-industry interfaces. Prof. Michal Biron, Head of the School of Management, emphasized the importance of such connections for shaping future academic impact.

The Reuben Hecht Museum (Credit: Hecht Museum Facebook page)

RESEARCH

Unethical Medicine, Unequal Care

A study by Prof. Nissim (Nassi) Cohen, PhD candidate Dana Natan-Krop, and Prof. Dani Filc (Ben-Gurion University) found that one in six Israelis has paid a bribe for medical treatment—highlighting a troubling phenomenon that undermines ethics and deepens inequality in Israel's healthcare system.

Antisemitism and Anti-Black Racism

Dr. Shelly Engdau, Dr. Gil Rothschild-Elyassi, and doctoral student Moria Tadele are part of an international project led by Prof. Lewis R. Gordon (University of Connecticut) exploring contemporary antisemitism and anti-Black racism. The project fosters global academic dialogue through workshops and conferences promoting cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Excellence in Research

Dr. Yuval Ofek-Shani, a teaching fellow in the Department of Economics and research associate at the Haifa Center for the Politics of Inequality, was named a 2025 Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation Fellow. His study, conducted with Prof. Analia Schlosser (Tel Aviv University) and Dr. Roni Porat (Hebrew University), examines how cross-ethnic teacher assignments can reduce violence in Israeli schools. The prestigious Guggenheim awards recognize scholars advancing understanding of violence and its prevention.

Academy Preparation Program (Credit: Commission for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Facebook page)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Spoken Hebrew

The Continuing Education Unit, the Dean of Students' Social Engagement Unit, and Afak College are leading the *"Spoken Hebrew"* project, in which native Hebrew-speaking students teach Hebrew in Arab schools. The initiative aims to reduce language gaps — one of the main barriers faced by Arab youth, including university students. Following the project's success, the goal for next year is to double the number of participants.

Culture and Science Day for Youth

"Path to Excellence" is an annual program for outstanding Arab youth aged 18–20, run in collaboration with the AJIC Association. The program equips participants with practical tools for academic success and career readiness through courses in academic literacy, Hebrew language skills, entrepreneurship, and rhetoric. Around 100 high school graduates from Nazareth and Sachnin attended a Culture and Science Day, sharing their experiences and expressing interest in future studies at the University of Haifa.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Coexistence in Design

Dr. Rachel Gatz-Salomon, lecturer Ihab Jiris, and students Michelle Banderski, Yasmina Awidat, and Sandra Sabbah won first place in the *Ambassadors of Coexistence 2025* competition by the Manara Center in Abu Dhabi. Their entry, *"Religious Tolerance Through Fashion,"* highlights Druze student Yasmina Oweidat's integration of personal and religious identity into a garment conveying peace and inclusion. The team was named *International Ambassadors*, promoting coexistence and bridging communities in the Middle East and North Africa.

OPERATIONS

Diversity Ambassadors Program

The Diversity Ambassadors Program, initiated by the Commission for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in collaboration with Human Resources, the Staff Union, and the Accord Center, aims to foster a multicultural campus community and positive intergroup relations. The inaugural cohort included 17 academic and administrative staff members who received training on social identity, conflict management, and practical framworks such as the Mini-Active model for developing joint initiatives.

Getting to Know the Other – A Shared Journey

The University of Haifa launched the *Getting to Know the Other* workshop, developed by the Center for Shared Society in Givat Haviva in collaboration with the Commission for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The program brings together Jewish and Arab academic and administrative staff to deepen understanding of different communities through learning, dialogue, and personal experience.

University Staff (Credit: Commission for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Facebook page)

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE

RESEARCH

Revitalizing Neighborhoods

Prof. Irith Tzarf-Harel from the School of Design participated in a multidisciplinary research project on *Revitalizing Neighborhoods*, conducted in collaboration with the Association of Planners in Israel, the Strategic Planning Unit of Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality, and the Yad Hanadiv Foundation. The year-long study aimed to deepen understanding of neighborhood-scale urban renewal. Prof. Tzarf-Harel presented her research focusing on *synchronizing three dimensions of urban renewal: public, community, and private spaces.*

Innovations in Archaeological Sciences

The ACDS Knowledge Center (Archaeology, Conservation, Digital Sciences) at the School of Archaeology and Maritime Cultures serves as a national hub for archaeological research, conservation, and digital sciences. It aims to create a scientific infrastructure focused on applied research and community service. The center houses advanced laboratories that encourage researchers to adopt innovative methods, including analytical chemistry, machine learning, and artificial intelligence.

Keller House Haifa (Credit: Dr. David Bar-On)

Spiritual Prehistory

A study by the universities of Haifa, Tel Aviv, and Ben-Gurion, published in *PNAS*, uncovered a rare 35,000-year-old ritual site in Menot Cave, Western Galilee. Featuring a tortoise-shaped stone surrounded by stalagmites, it provides some of the earliest evidence of communal religious rituals among Paleolithic hunter-gatherers. The discovery was led by Prof. Omry Barzilai, Prof. Ofer Marder, and Prof. Israel Hershkovitz.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Teachers Learning

A new initiative launched this week connects the Hari Sessler Chair in Zionism, founded by Dr. Reuven Hecht, with the Ministry of Education to deepen teachers' knowledge of Zionism and current research. The program features unique workshops, educational tours, and online lectures led by top experts. Collaboration with the Ministry will expand to additional areas, including archival work at Keller House and other practical learning opportunities.

Community Collaborations

A partnership agreement was signed between the University's School of Tourism, its Continuing Education Unit, and the Nazareth Culture and Tourism Association to offer joint courses in Nazareth. University President Prof. Gur Alroey and Vice President & CEO Mr. Sharon Zaid signed the agreement with Walid Afifi, Vice President of the Afifi Group, representing the association. The collaboration strengthens the University's presence in northern Israel and deepens ties with the local community.

Curiosity Quests for Kids

The Hecht Museum's children's workshops invite kids and their parents on an engaging journey through time. Activities include creative workshops, games, digital experiences, and special visits to university labs. One example, *Adventure in the Time Tunnel*, is held in collaboration with the Carmel Medal Future Researchers Center, enhancing the museum's educational role within the community.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Journey to the Self

The Social Engagement Unit launched the empowerment program *Journey to the Self* for Druze students, in collaboration with the *Derech Mufid Amar – Brothers for Life* association, in memory of Salah Fallah. The program fosters an active, engaged group to explore Druze identity and social challenges while developing skills in entrepreneurship, personal branding, and public speaking. Participants meet prominent Druze figures and work on social initiatives to support vulnerable communities.

Interior Design for Seniors

In the Interior Design course at the Department of Architecture, led by architects Dana Gordon, Lauron Katz, and Omer Levin, students focused on designing spaces tailored for the elderly. Guided by a human-centered approach—from individual to environment, interior to exterior—they developed concepts that can inform future adaptations in senior living facilities and assisted housing.

Heritage Guardians

The University's Continuing Education Unit launched a unique course, *Heritage Site Conservators*, led by Dr. Assaf Selzer from the Department of Israel Studies, in collaboration with the *Council for the Preservation of Heritage Sites in Israel*. Participants explore Israel's rich heritage and conservation practices across historical periods, combining academic coursework with guided field visits throughout the country.

OPERATIONS

Expanding the Templar Collection

The Gottlieb Schumacher Institute at the Keller House received a remarkable donation of thousands of items—documents, photographs, postcards, coins, and rare books—related to the Templars. Collected over two decades, primarily from abroad, the collection is now being sorted and cataloged. Once conservation work at the Keller House is complete, it will be made accessible to researchers in the field.

Library Catalogs Merged

Following the establishment of the School of Design, its library catalog was merged with that of the Younes & Soraya Nazarian Library. The combined collection is rich and diverse, reflecting the school's fields of study. Advanced search systems allow students to access information independently, while library staff are available to assist both at the German Colony campus library and at the University Library on Mount Carmel.

RESEARCH

Global Trade Stays Afloat

A new study by Dr. Nitzan Feldman from the School of Political Science and Haagay Etkes from the Bank of Israel found that despite the Houthi blockade, global shipping quickly adapted. Freight costs have dropped sharply in recent months, and no major disruptions have been observed.

Food Waste on the Buffet Table

In her doctoral research under Profs. Ofira Ayalon and Noga Collins-Kreiner, Dr. Gabriela Appel examined food waste in Israel's "all-inclusive" hotel buffets. Based on interviews with 24 chefs and managers in six cities and surveys from 500 guests, the study sheds light on one of Israel's most characteristic hospitality habits. The findings were published in the *International Journal of Tourism Management*.

Recycling Pays Off

A study by Dr. Yaniv Reingewertz and Prof. Ofira Ayalon found that adding recycling bins increases waste separation by 17% per bin; closer bins raise participation by 50%, and financial incentives boost it by over 100%. Published in *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, the study urges combining accessibility and incentives to improve recycling in Israel.

School of Design (Credit: University of Haifa)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Fashion Design at the *About Us* Fair

The Department of Fashion Design took part in the *About Us* fair in Tel Aviv. The opening night featured a blue-and-white fashion show led by prominent women and showcasing designs by students, alumni, and established creators. A pop-up shop offered locally designed pieces for sale—celebrating and supporting original Israeli design.

Fighting for the Neighborhood

Residents of Haifa's Bat Galim neighborhood are leading a campaign against planned construction in the historic "Casino" area, supported by the Environmental Justice Clinic at the Faculty of Law, led by attorney Inbar Druyan.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Learning About Fashion Production in India

Students and faculty from the Department of Fashion Design participated in a study tour to India, led by Dr. Rachel Getz-Salomon, head of the department. The visit made possible through collaboration with JD Institute of Fashion & Textiles and the Israeli Cultural Attaché in India, Ms. Avital Barak, included a tour and workshops at *Instant Karma*—one of the world's leading sustainable fashion factories, working with top international brands.

Sustainability in Practice

In response to growing social and environmental challenges, the *KAYMA Center* and the *School of Environmental Studies*, in collaboration with Prof. Lea Wittenberg, developed a course exploring sustainable social, environmental, and economic models. The opening session, held in June 2023, examined the UN Sustainable Development Goals alongside ESG practices, discussing human behavioral and policy impacts on the environment — from the draining of the Hula Lake to waste management and biodiversity loss. Students explored real-world organizational and community challenges and reflected on key lessons learned. The course will be offered again in the upcoming winter semester.

Fashion Department visit to India (Credit: School of Design Facebook page)

OPERATIONS

Advancing in Payroll

The university has launched a new and upgraded payroll system from the *Melam Salary*. The advanced system integrates existing systems into a single online platform, enhancing overall efficiency. For employees, the main change is reflected in a redesigned pay slip.

Campus Fairs

A new campus market opened during the academic year on Mondays and Wednesdays at the 600 Plaza. Visitors can browse fashion accessories, contemporary trends, jewelry, clothing, home decorations, and gifts. On Wednesdays, a farmers' market features products from northern Israel and the Lebanon border, including cheeses, olive oil, breads, dried fruits, and more. In addition, the traditional book fair organized by the *Sipur Chozer* association continues several times a year.

A Greener Campus

The University of Haifa continues to advance sustainability on campus to reduce its carbon footprint and make the natural environment more accessible. The university has switched to recycled paper for printing and encourages the use of reusable utensils. Disposable cups, plates, and cutlery will now only be available in compostable versions, and plastic single-use items can no longer be ordered from storage.

13 CLIMATE ACTION

TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

RESEARCH

Climate Resilience in the Negev

Prof. Maya Negev, with colleagues from Ben-Gurion University, studied climate-related health risks for vulnerable populations in Israel, including Bedouin communities in the Negev. Presented at the 52nd Annual Science and Environment Conference, the research highlights community initiatives address these challenges.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Mothers Who Don't Hoard

The Presidential Climate Forum held a webinar with the group "Mothers Who Don't Hoard." Prof. Ofira Ayalon from the School of Environmental Sciences explained in an interview with MAKO that initiatives like this, which exist in many places, give products a second life and help reduce waste.

Climate Vulnerability Assessment

Prof. Maya Negev, in collaboration with the Galilee Association and Shfaram Municipality, conducted a climate vulnerability assessment of Shfaram to identify and analyze potential impacts and risks from climate change.

(Credit: Gal Rozen)

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Environmental Insights

The Climate and Environmental Sustainability Center has begun publishing informational sheets on environmental topics for review and distribution. Topics covered include rainfall pattern changes, fast fashion, trees, food waste, and more.

Climate & Conflict: Politics in a Warming Middle East

An online course by Prof. Yuval Ben-Bassat from the School of History explores the climate crisis and politics in the Middle East. The course examines the impact of the climate crisis on the region, including issues such as water and food shortages, desertification, and the intensification of internal and international tensions. It also discusses how domestic and regional politics contribute to the worsening of the crisis.

Living on the Edge?

Dr. Moshe Gish, from the School of Environmental Sciences, teaches an academic course titled "*Living on the Edge: The Collapse of Nature in the 21st Century*", which addresses the environmental crisis. The ongoing deterioration of the stability and functioning of natural ecosystems will force us—and future generations—to make significant lifestyle changes in order to maintain a reasonable standard of living. In this course, Dr. Gish explores with students what can be done to save humanity from a bleak future.

OPERATIONS

Environmental Justice Clinic Launched

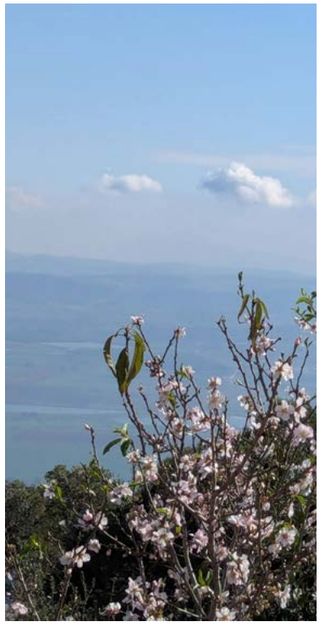
The new Environmental Justice Clinic tackles land and marine protection, promotes inclusive environmental policy, and addresses social inequality tied to climate challenges. Students will provide legal support to affected communities, work with policymakers, and gain hands-on experience driving a real environmental and social change.

First Place in Reducing Printing

As part of the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences' sustainability efforts, the School of Public Health ranked first in reducing print volume in 2023–2024. The faculty actively promotes eco-friendly practices and encourages staff to minimize printer use in support of a greener lifestyle.

Grants for Presenting Climate Research Abroad

The Climate and Environmental Sustainability Hub offers support grants for outstanding PhD students wishing to present their research at recognized international conferences focused on climate crisis, environment, and sustainability. Priority given to research in areas such as climate-tech, carbon capture, and sustainable solutions in energy, agriculture, food, water, and the blue economy—especially those with significant environmental and social impact.



(Credit: Lea Mussay)

RESEARCH

University of Haifa in the Galápagos

A collaborative study between Dr. Tal Luzzatto-Knaan of the Leon H. Charney School of Marine Sciences and Dr. Inti Keith from the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galápagos focuses on invasive algae species and biodiversity. Led by PhD student Omri Nahor, in collaboration with Prof. Alvaro Israel from the Israel Oceanographic and Limnological Research Institute, the team conducted dives across 36 sites in the western islands. The findings are expected to improve monitoring of invasive species and support marine conservation efforts in the Galápagos.

Corals Under Pressure

Prof. Tali Mass from the Department of Marine Biology recently returned from a research visit to Moorea, French Polynesia, where she joined PhD student Pierrick Harnie in a groundbreaking study on *Pocillopora* corals. Supported by the U.S.–Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF Climate Solutions), the project explores how corals adapt to climate change, ocean warming, and acidification, in collaboration with Dr. Hollie Putnam of the University of Rhode Island.

(Credit: Hagai Nativ, The Morris Kahn Research Centre)

Mapping the Deep

A new study at the Charney School of Marine Sciences aims to chart and protect 30% of Israel's deep sea. Using an underwater robot in the "Palmachim Disturbance" reserve off Israel's coast, Prof. Itzik Makovsky and a multidisciplinary team are mapping habitats to guide future marine conservation efforts.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Researchers Meet Teens

The Leon H. Charney School of Marine Sciences and the University of Haifa's Youth Division hosted an online event for hundreds of teens from across Israel participating in the global *FIRST LEGO League* competition. This year's theme focused on marine research and robotics, with presentations by Prof. Daniel Sher (Marine Biology) and Prof. Roee Diamant (Marine Technologies).

Mammals of the Deep

The National Maritime Museum is hosting a new exhibition, *The Wonderful World of Marine Mammals in the Mediterranean and the Gulf of Eilat*, in collaboration with The Israeli Marine Mammal Research and Assistance Center (IMMRAC) and the Recanati Institute for Maritime Studies at the University of Haifa. This is Israel's most comprehensive exhibition dedicated to marine mammals, featuring skeletons, skulls, and bones from 11 of the 18 cetacean species recorded in Israeli waters.

Protecting the Sea Together

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI) and the Maurice Kahn Marine Research Station at the Charney School of Marine Sciences launched a public initiative to report dead or injured fish along the Mediterranean coast via the SeaWatch app. The data will help researchers map fish mortality and identify potential causes. Dr. Danny Morick highlights the value of public observations for monitoring marine and fish health.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

Blue Innovation

The Charney School of Marine Sciences completed the third cycle of its Pre-Accelerator program, fostering impactful marine innovation projects.

School Community Meeting

The Charney School of Marine Sciences held a Community Day to strengthen connections between its departments, facilitate knowledge sharing, and promote research collaborations. About 100 faculty, staff, students, and marine science enthusiasts attended, including a lecture by Prof. Iain Couzin, a world-renowned researcher on collective animal behavior, on behavioral principles in diverse ecosystems based on observations and models.

Blue Economy Training for Soldiers

The Leon H. Charney School of Marine Sciences, in collaboration with the HIL Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, will launch a unique training program for discharged soldiers and reservists in blue economy, marine, and coastal environments. The program combines theoretical learning with hands-on experience in developing green and innovative ventures, offering comprehensive training in marine science, environmental studies, economics, and entrepreneurship.

OPERATIONS

New Coastal Research Vessel

The EcoOcean Association, in collaboration with the Maurice Kahn Marine Research Station, acquired a new coastal research vessel named in memory of Salit Leibovitz Freilich, a former university student who worked with the association. The vessel will support diverse research activities, including educational cruises and diver training.

Open Day at the Maurice Kahn Station

The Maurice Kahn Marine Research Station hosted an open day, inviting students and visitors for a guided tour to explore the station's research activities and operations.

Prof. Yizhaq Makovsky (Credit: The Leon H. Charney School of Marine Sciences, University of Haifa)

RESEARCH

Protein Atlas for Disease-Resistant Plants

A new study led by Prof. Tzion Fahima from the University of Haifa, published in *Nature Genetics*, unveils the first *Atlas of Tandem Kinase Proteins (TKPs)*—key components in plant immune defense. The findings lay the groundwork for developing disease-resistant crops, reducing pesticide use, and strengthening global food security. The research conducted with doctoral and postdoctoral students from Prof. Fahima's lab and collaborators from partner institutions.

"Catching a Ride"

A study in *Current Biology* by Dr. Elad Chiel and Dr. Sarit Rohkin Shalom from the University of Haifa – Oranim Campus, with colleagues from the Max Planck Institute and the University of Utah, uncovers a unique way bacteria pass between generations in a parasitic wasp.

The bacterium *Sodalis* "catches a ride" on the wasp's venom, enters a fly pupa, multiplies inside it, and returns to the next generation of wasps—revealing a new facet of insect–microbe interactions.

Study tour at the Dead Sea (Credit: School of Environmental Sciences)

Reviving Coral Reefs with Clay

Oren Arbel from the School of Arts, Culture and Interpretation is part of a research team that conducted a unique experiment in Fiji, successfully regenerating coral reefs using clay substrates. The innovative project was featured in *Haaretz*'s "Gallery" supplement.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Earth Day Event

The university hosted an Earth Day event led by the School of Environmental Sciences, in collaboration with the Student Union and the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Library. Highlights included a virtual reality experience of endangered habitats, a poster exhibition on environmental issues, a library display of environmental books, and a seedling giveaway. The event aimed to raise awareness and encourage action on environmental challenges.

Free Accommodation for Israel Trail Hikers

In collaboration with the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, the University offers free campus accommodation for Israel Trail hikers. The initiative reflects the University's commitment to community, sustainability, and promoting Israel's hiking culture.

Selected as Lead Authors for the IPBES Assessment

Prof. Andrea Ghermandi (School of Environmental Sciences) and Prof. Gil Rilov (Department of Marine Biology) were selected as lead authors—and the only representatives from Israel—for the upcoming IPBES Monitoring Assessment, part of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

"Environmental Ambassadors" Program Launches

A groundbreaking program supported by the Ted Arison Family Foundation ("Yad Hanadiv") has been launched to train and develop leaders in the Arab community for the advancement and implementation of environmental policy. The curriculum combines academic training, workshops, and practical field internships, providing participants with both theoretical knowledge and practical tools to realize their vision. The opening session of the first cohort took place last week, attended by program directors Prof. Mashor Housh and Prof. Rassem Khamaisi from the School of Environmental Sciences.

Rwanda–Israel Educational Program Launch

The Rwanda–Israel educational program, led by Prof. Uri Shanas and TiME organization, has launched. Teachers from both countries met to plan the curriculum, and throughout the year, students from Rwanda and Israel will work in mixed groups to study and select, via a democratic vote, a natural area for conservation.

Impactful Program in Sustainability

A master's program in environmental and social sustainability with an impact focus was launched, engaging 11 students in in-depth study of social challenges in Israel, exploration of the global implications of the climate crisis, and a broad understanding of environmental economics. As part of a weekly thesis seminar, the students developed their final projects while deepening their skills in research methods and statistics.

OPERATIONS

Campus Walking Trails

In the "Green Campus" competition organized by the Division of Innovation and Sustainability , in collaboration with the Operations and Human Resources Division, a project was selected to establish walking trails serving the entire university community – students, faculty, and staff – promoting a sustainable lifestyle and connecting participants to open spaces, artworks, and scenic viewpoints. The trails will be accessible to visitors, with seating areas for public use. The project is led by Prof. Noga Collins-Kreiner, Prof. Ofira Ayalon, Dr. Alik Adler, Nira Alon, and Tzafrir Yishai.

Inauguration of the Genomics Unit

The University of Haifa inaugurated its new Genomics Unit, providing advanced genomics services to researchers. The ceremony, hosted by Prof. Asaf Distelfeld, featured presentations by Dr. Hiba Zaidan, Director, and Dr. Martin Mikel, Head of the Academic Unit, who outlined the unit's vision, services, equipment, and ongoing projects, emphasizing its role in advancing genomics research at the university.

University of Haifa Establishes Regenerative Agriculture Research Farm

The University of Haifa has partnered with agronomist and entrepreneur Dr. Gideon Bickel, who donated 61 dunams in Moshav Neve Yarak to establish a regenerative agriculture research farm. Led by Prof. Assaf Distelfeld of the Institute of Evolution, the farm will focus on sustainable farming methods, crop improvement, and climate resilience. According to University President Prof. Gur Alroey, the initiative marks a major step in advancing sustainability research in Israel and beyond.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS

RESEARCH

CEOs Under Review

A new study by Dr. Yifat Aran from the Faculty of Law examined the tenure of CEOs in U.S. publicly traded companies that received venture capital funding and went public between 2002 and 2020. The study compared companies with dual class shares to similar companies with a single class of shares. The findings were published in *The Marker*.

Paying for Care: A Troubling Trend in Israel's Health System

A new study by Prof. Nissim (Nessy) Cohen and PhD student Dana Netan-Krop from the School of Political Science, in collaboration with Prof. Danny Filk from Ben-Gurion University, highlights a troubling phenomenon in the Israeli healthcare system: one in six Israelis paid a bribe to receive medical treatment for themselves or a family member. The study's findings were published in *Haaretz*.

Loss of Trust and Systemic Corruption

The 21st Public Sector Performance Index, conducted by Profs. Eran Vigoda-Gadot and Shlomo Mizrahi, reveals a sharp decline in public trust in government institutions. Seventy-four percent of Israelis lack trust in the Prime Minister, 85% in the Knesset and parties, and 80% believe corruption permeates all levels of government. The researchers attribute this trend to politicization, sectoral decision-making, and the government's conduct during the Iron Swords War.

Michael and Linda Frieze Honorary Doctorate Ceremony (Credit: University of Haifa)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Haifa Interfaith Forum

At a ceremony held at Haifa City Hall, the *Haifa Interfaith Forum* was launched, led by the *Laboratory for the Study of Religions* at the University of Haifa, under Prof. Uriel Simonsohn, in collaboration with the Haifa Municipality. Mayor Yona Yahav praised the University's initiative to promote dialogue and understanding among communities, especially amid the war. Prof. Mouna Maroun, the incoming Rector, spoke alongside religious leaders and social activists from Haifa's diverse faith communities.

Gerontology as a Medical Profession

Prof. Israel (Issi) Doron, Dean of the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences and Chair of the Ethics Committee of the Israeli Gerontological Society, stated at a conference on gerontology as a profession: "It is no coincidence that there is still no 'Gerontologists Law' or formal recognition of gerontology as a medical profession. We must demonstrate that we possess a unique set of tools — encompassing knowledge and a deep understanding of all service systems for the elderly population." Prof. Doron's remarks were quoted in a in Haaretz newspaper.

Frieze Center for a Shared Society

The University of Haifa is establishing *the Frieze Center*, named after Michael and Linda Frieze, to address Israel's social diversity and foster shared living. Led by Prof. Uriel Simonsohn, the center will develop tools to help citizens, communities, and institutions navigate differences—religious, ethnic, gender, and more—aiming to create an inclusive society where everyone has a place and rights.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

University Resilience Center

Vice President and CEO Sharon Zaid and Kalanit Kalimer, Head of Student Dean's Office, represented Israel's first *University Resilience Center* at a conference. The center supports students, faculty, and the community in coping with stress, trauma, and crises, operating in collaboration with all university units and guided by a steering committee. It is part of the Israeli Trauma Coalition initiative in partnership with the Rothschild Foundation.

"Shared Lives Ambassadors" Hackathon

Organized by the Student Dean's Office and Rothschild Ambassadors, the hackathon brought together students from diverse groups to learn social entrepreneurship, multicultural initiatives, and leadership. Ms. Sapir Bluzer, Chair of the Forum of Women Reservists, delivered an inspiring lecture on activism, and participants developed ideas for a shared campus space while gaining hands-on experience in leadership and collaboration.

OPERATIONS

Inauguration of the Faculty of Law Building

In December 2024, the Faculty of Law building, named after Max Silberstein and Elizabeth Blum Silberstein, was inaugurated in the presence of former Supreme Court President, Justice Esther Hayut, and Mr. Nathan Silberstein, a longtime friend of the university. His generous contribution made it possible for the faculty to move into its new home, dedicated in honor of his parents.

Language Editing Services by the University's Younes & Soraya Nazarian Library Team

Recently, there has been an increased demand for language editing services in routine administrative areas. In response, the University, in collaboration with the Younes & Soraya Nazarian Library, launched a pilot program providing language editing for presentations, signage, public announcements, and other administrative materials, aiming to improve clarity and writing quality. The pilot will draw on the expertise and skills of the library team.

Legally Speaking

Faculty members at the University of Haifa's Faculty of Law frequently participate in podcasts and radio programs, sharing their extensive legal knowledge across a wide range of fields. They discuss topics such as sports law, gender, human rights, environmental law, international law, and property law, as well as current issues affecting Israeli society. Their engagement helps make academic expertise accessible to the public and contributes to informed, evidence-based public discourse.

RESEARCH

Securing the Deep

Dr. Oren Gal's lab at the Department of Marine Technologies is partnering with *Rafael* in the EU-funded *UnderSec* project to advance underwater security technologies. The team will develop smart algorithms that detect underwater targets by integrating data from multiple sensors—aimed at protecting ships, marine infrastructure, and ecosystems. This collaboration highlights the lab's global reputation for excellence in marine data processing and algorithm development.

Urban Atmosphere in Focus

Dr. Dalit Shach-Pinsly from the School of Design will co-lead Working Group 2 (WG2) as part of the **COST CitySenZ initiative** on architecture and urban atmosphere, recently launched in Paris. The project investigates how sensory and emotional experiences can inform more effective urban planning, moving beyond top-down approaches. **WG2** focuses on gathering diverse urban data—such as shade, noise, perceived safety, and walkability—to support a more holistic, human-centered design process.

Dr. Neri Oxman and Mr. Bill Ackman Honorary Doctorate Ceremony (Credit: University of Haifa)

Reported Anxiety in AI

A new study by Dr. Ziv Ben-Zion from the School of Public Health, in collaboration with Yale University, found that exposing ChatGPT to traumatic stories increases the levels of "anxiety" it reports. The study, published in the journal *npj Digital Medicine*, also found that mindfulness techniques reduced the reported anxiety by about 33%. According to Ben-Zion, although ChatGPT does not experience emotions, it responds to emotional contexts in the text. The findings suggest new directions for applying AI in the field of mental health support—while also calling for caution in interpreting its results.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Honorary Doctorates to Oxman and Ackman

The University of Haifa awarded honorary doctorates to Dr. Neri Oxman and Mr. Bill Ackman for their leadership, innovation, and philanthropy. Oxman, founder of OXMAN and former MIT researcher, is a global design pioneer, while Ackman, CEO of Pershing Square, is known for activist investing and philanthropic initiatives. University President Prof. Gur Alroey called them inspiring models of excellence and impact.

Age-Friendly University and Haifa Municipality

The 'Age-Friendly University' initiative (AGU-H) continues to expand its academic and practical activities to promote optimal aging in the city of Haifa. The steering committee met with representatives from Haifa Municipality, including the deputy mayors, who expressed willingness to collaborate on various projects. The first agreed-upon initiative is the muni100 project, based on the World Health Organization's Age Friendly Cities model, aiming to adapt public spaces to the needs of older adults. Additionally, other projects such as 'Generation to Generation' and 'Academic Tastings' involving

Art as a Bridge Between Brain and Heart

A unique campus event was held in collaboration with the Mediterranean Biennale, led by Prof. Blue Simion Feinro from the School of Design, and the Brain and Behavior Center, headed by Prof. Simon Shamai-Tsuri. Eighth-grade students from Deir Hanna School and the Open School in Haifa—both Jewish and Arab—came together for a shared educational experience focused on brain research and intercultural dialogue. The event included lectures by faculty members, along with students from the School of Arts Therapy and doctoral students from the Brain and Behavior Center.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

MBA in Technology Management

The new MBA program with a specialization in Technology Management is an international program offered in collaboration between the University of Haifa and ECNU University in China. Prof. Shalom Shirman traveled to China for the month of April to teach the course "Negotiation" to the university

Rethinking Chronic Pain

The university hosted the second International Conference on Neuroplastic Pain, led by Prof. Pavel Goldstein and Dr. Nir Brosh with support from the International Affairs Division. Over 180 participants from medicine, therapy, and research explored innovative approaches to chronic pain, highlighting the role of medical communication as a key factor in recovery.

Voices for Children's Rights

Ebenezer Lartey, an MA student in Education and Development in Early Childhood, represented Ghana at the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva, sharing insights on children's rights and education based on his work with Early Childhood Network Ghana. The program, led by Prof. Avi Sagi-Schwartz, integrates the UN SDGs and in 2024–2025 includes 20 students from 11 countries, with strong African and Far East representation.

OPERATIONS

An Inspiring Summer

The Youth University of Haifa offers programs that expose gifted and curious young people to the university centers of excellence. Focusing on sustainability and social-environmental issues, the programs broaden horizons and provide engaging courses that foster creative and challenging learning experiences. This summer, a variety of enrichment courses were offered.

Global Engagement at the University of Haifa

The Division of Global Engagement connects students, staff, and faculty while promoting international exchange. It shares expertise with global partners to enhance research and higher education standards and provides a welcoming environment for international students and researchers across all university units.

Kayma Center

Three years after its establishment, the Kayma Center published its first report, highlighting its approach to impact. Combining international efforts to address global challenges with innovative financial models, the Center examines the effects of organizational and state activities on society and the environment and develops practical tools to measure and manage them.

Driving Impact Towards the Sustainable Development Goals
Division of Innovation & Sustainability and the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Library
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