

Enjoy unique membership benefits

In return for fellows' investment of time and energy, BGU invests in them: in their personal and philanthropic growth, their professional horizons, and their potential to make a measurable difference for Israel and the world. Benefits include:

- **International Connections**
Fellows grow their circle of professional connections to include business and community leaders from around the world.
- **Meaningful Friendships**
Fellows meet like-minded people who share their core values, commitments, and connection to the Jewish people and Israel.
- **Leadership Development**
Fellows learn new ideas and best practices for becoming effective, influential leaders in their professional and/or communal lives.
- **Unique Encounter with Israel**
Fellows see an Israel that most others cannot, including tours of top researchers' laboratories, visits to innovative community programs, and meetings with scholars, policymakers, and leaders changing the face of the Negev and Israel.
- **Opportunity for Impact**
Now, more than ever, the Negev needs support in rebuilding. Fellows gain the knowledge and tools to inspire others to support strategic, sustainable change in Israel and at home.



Learn more about engagement
with Israel's pioneering university

For more information about BGU, visit our website at <https://in.bgu.ac.il/en/friends>, and follow us on



For questions about Halutz or to express interest in membership, [contact the head of your local BGU association](#) or email Jeff Kaye, Vice President for Public Affairs and Resource Development at BGU, at jeffkaye@bgu.ac.il.

BUILDERS and BELIEVERS:

The Halutz Initiative for Global Leadership Cohort V

April 26 - May 3, 2026



אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Join an elite community of leaders who are learning to make a difference



Realize your capacity to help build a better world

Now in its fifth year, the Halutz Initiative is an incubator for a new kind of pioneer: forward-thinking, entrepreneurial, socially minded supporters of Israel equipped with leadership qualities and a nuanced understanding of the most critical issues of the day.

An immersive program led by scholars and scientists from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) prepares a select group of promising individuals to turn their passions into practical solutions – for BGU, the Negev, Israel and the world.

Candidates

The Halutz Initiative accepts exceptional individuals (in the age range of around 30-50) who are committed to Israel and care deeply about social change. They are marked by intellectual curiosity and demonstrated leadership abilities, and are motivated to take part in a demanding yet rewarding one-year educational experience.

Program

Fellows participate in a fully funded, week-long seminar held in Israel in the spring of each year. Designed to deepen fellows' knowledge of the most pressing problems facing Israel and the world, the seminar also exposes them to the innovative solutions developed at BGU.

In addition, fellows join in three virtual group meetings: two pre-seminar sessions in November and January and one post-seminar session in May.

Goals

Fellows share their knowledge of key issues and potential solutions with bold thinkers, savvy investors, and business and community leaders in their home countries. In this way, they build networks of support for BGU research and activities and help advance a better Israel and world.

Commitment

The Halutz Initiative covers all fellows' travel and related program costs. Fellows should understand and be comfortable with the expectations from them, recognizing that the program is both a financial and time-intensive investment in them. They will not be asked to commit to a philanthropic gift, but will be comfortable with the expectation that they will repay this investment in some manner in the future.

Application

Suitable candidates should express their interest in applying to the program to the head of their local BGU association, and complete an application form. The association will submit the candidate's application to BGU's Global Development Committee, at jeffkaye@bgu.ac.il.

Applicants will be interviewed between July-August, and letters of acceptance mailed in September.

Participate in a transformative Israel experience

Connecting

Day 1 / Sunday, April 26, 2026

Arrival in Israel and welcome dinner at the home of Jeff Kaye, Vice President for Public Affairs and Resource Development at BGU, in the Jerusalem hills.

Learning

Day 2 / Monday, April 27, 2026

Meetings in Jerusalem with policymakers, community leaders, and change agents for an overview of Israel's most pressing security, economic, social, and environmental challenges.

Experiencing

Days 3-5 / Tuesday - Thursday, April 28-30, 2026

Sessions at BGU's Marcus Family Campus in Beer-Sheva with leading researchers from various faculties and institutes, including the Ilse Katz Institute for Nanoscale Science and Technology, the National Institute for Biotechnology in the Negev, and the Yazamut 360° Center for Entrepreneurship; the Azrieli National Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment Research; and more. There will also be sessions at Sde Boker's Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research, home to the world's leading institute for water research and leading institutes for research in drylands agriculture and energy, as well as the School of Sustainability and Climate Change, the Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism, and the Ben-Gurion Archives.

There will be opportunities to meet individually with BGU faculty working in specific areas of interest, and tours of programs in partnership with and for the benefit of the Negev's diverse communities.

Reflecting

Day 6 / Friday, May 1, 2026

A day at Sde Boker's Isrotel Kedma, a desert-inspired luxury hotel in the traditional Nabatean style. A chance to hike in the stunning Zin Valley, or an afternoon swim and spa, followed by Shabbat dinner and a social evening with new friends made during the week.

Planning

Day 7 / Saturday, May 2, 2026

Optional desert activities and walk to David Ben-Gurion's desert home. Relax by the pool or in the spa, followed by a concluding session on translating learning into action in fellows' home countries.

Farewell

Early Sunday, May 3, 2026