



Association of University Heads, Israel

November 5, 2024

To: Prof. Or Hen
Prof. Ernest Fraenkel,
MIT-Kalaniyot Program leads

From: Prof. Daniel Chamovitz
President, Ben-Gurion University, and
Chair, Association of University Heads, Israel

Dear Professors Hen and Fraenkel,

I was delighted to receive the Kalaniyot call for postdoctoral and sabbatical visitors at MIT. At a time when collaborations with Israeli academics are becoming increasingly fragile, the Kalaniyot program stands as a testament to the enduring strength of partnerships based on shared knowledge and mutual respect. By offering postdoctoral and sabbatical opportunities to Israeli scholars, you are reinforcing the critical exchange of ideas that enriches both Israeli and international institutions alike. These collaborations are the foundation upon which some of the most groundbreaking research is built, and your initiative ensures that this exchange continues, even in these trying times.

What I find particularly remarkable about Kalaniyot is the thoughtful way it balances its dual mission through committed faculty leadership. Not only does it invite Israeli scholars into MIT's academic fold, but it also fosters a supportive and inclusive environment for them—a space where they can grow, both professionally and personally. In doing so, Kalaniyot is creating the conditions necessary for long-term, fruitful collaboration, where scholars feel fully integrated into the academic community.

I believe Kalaniyot's impact will extend far beyond MIT, and I hope that your success will inspire similar efforts at peer institutions. There is a need now, more than ever, for programs that strengthen the global academic community and provide spaces where scholars from diverse backgrounds can connect and thrive. I am equally confident that this initiative will resonate with Jewish philanthropists in the U.S., who recognize the importance of supporting such impactful, forward-looking efforts.



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





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In writing this I find myself reflecting on our discussions during your visit to Israel six months ago, where we spoke at length about the shifting dynamics in the academic world and the new challenges our institutions are facing. It is deeply gratifying to see those conversations come to life with the establishment of the Kalaniyot program at MIT.

Thank you for your continued leadership in advancing these efforts. It is initiatives like Kalaniyot that remind us of the powerful role universities play in shaping a better future.

Sincerely,

Prof. Daniel A. Chamovitz, President of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev,
Chairperson of Association of Israeli University Heads – VERA

