

Community news

Canadian Friends of Hebrew University announces \$5,000,000 gift from the Asper Foundation

This transformative gift will name Asper HUJI Innovate at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Canadian Friends of Hebrew University are pleased to announce a transformative gift of five million dollars (\$5M) from The Asper Foundation that will be used to name Asper HUJI Innovate, a multi-disciplinary center dedicated to assisting students, faculty and alumni develop their innovation and entrepreneurial skills at the Hebrew University. This gift upholds a tradition of exceptional philanthropic support and collaboration between the Asper family and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem Israel (HUJI).

This gift will allow Asper HUJI Innovate to expand its footprint and professional led start-up accelerators to develop significant external partnerships. A portion of the funds will be used to establish an annual Asper Innovation Prize, valued at \$35,000 USD. The prize will be awarded during a juried competition, intended to encourage, and recognize outstanding and promising student led startups. The public event will also be used to showcase the University as a central force for global innovation within the Jerusalem ecosystem. (Jerusalem is currently ranked 6th in New Global Startup Ecosystem Report).

"It was the entrepreneurial spirit and wisdom of our late parents, Israel and Babs, that established ties with the Hebrew University close to sixty years ago. We are very proud of our long-standing partnership and connection to innovation that began with the creation of the Asper Center for Entrepreneurship in the Jerusalem School of Business Administration, in 2001. We are excited to witness, through Asper HUJI Innovate, new gen-



(l-r): RICHARD LEIPSIC, Trustee, Asper Foundation; DAVID ASPER, Trustee, Asper Foundation; LEONARD ASPER, Chair, Asper Foundation; GAIL ASPER, President, Asper Foundation

erations of students and academics lay the groundwork for advancing ideas, for generations to come," said Gail Asper, President, The Asper Foundation

The Asper HUJI Innovate platform encourages the entire university community, including students, faculty, and alumni and the Jerusalem community at large to develop their innovation and entrepreneurial capabilities.

Established in 2018, it was created as a platform to ensure that graduates are best prepared for the challenges brought about by disruption, inherent in an evolving workplace. Asper HUJI Innovate serves as a major boost to Jerusalem's startup ecosystem.

"The HUJI Innovate program is highly prized by the entire university, and The Asper Foundation's agreement to name and support the

centre will surely lead to a great leap forward in the Hebrew University's entrepreneurial enterprises. The vision and experience provided by Gail Asper, President of The Asper Foundation, has for many years been an invaluable asset for the Hebrew University, following the tradition of her beloved late father, Israel, who remains a legendary figure for many of us to this day," said Prof. Asher Cohen, President, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Innovation has long been one of Israel's most valuable resources. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem fuels Israel's vibrant entrepreneurial culture, advancing research and technology by educating its vital, highly skilled, human workforce; one that produces more startups per capita than any other nation in the world.