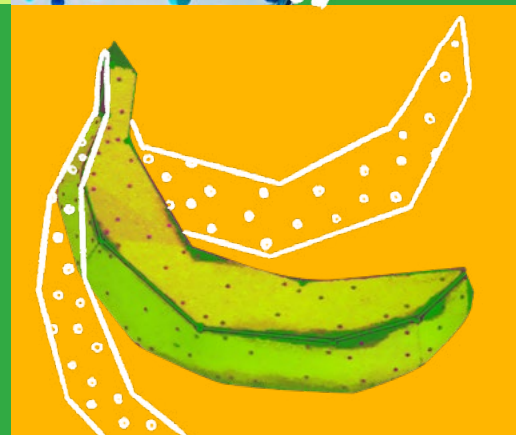
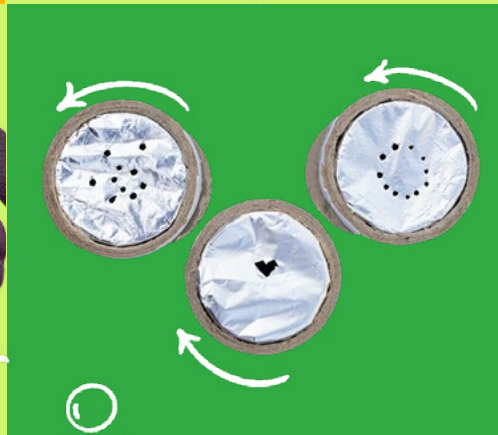
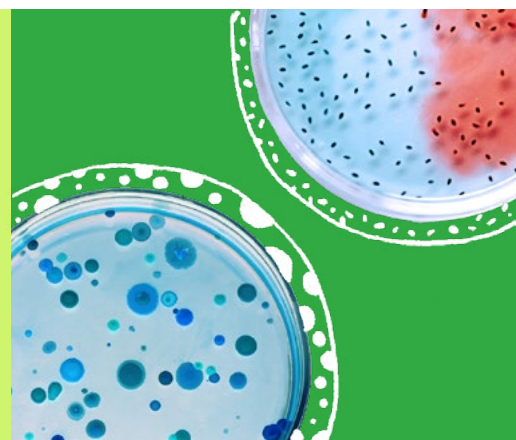
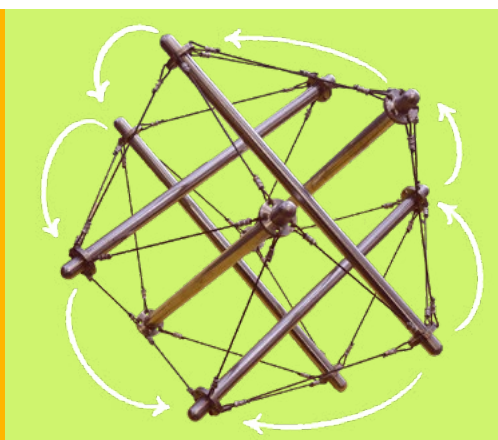


# Annual Report 2023

Bloomfield Science Museum  
Jerusalem



After much debate about whether and how to sum up the year 2023 when we are in still the midst of such a difficult and terrible war, we decided to look for the bright spots; to remember our achievements, and to share the insights we gained during the war in the hope that they will light our way and guide us in the future.

Important lessons that we learned during the war (and which we will continue to apply even on normal days):

In an emergency wartime situation such as the one we are currently in, cultural institutions do not seem to have much to offer. Despite this, we discovered that are ways in which we are able to be useful and fulfill our social purpose. The experience of the last few months has taught us some important lessons – many of which are applicable even during ‘normal’ times:

To watch the video click here

**1 Normalize life as much as possible, and fill the governmental vacuum that has been created.**

As part of civil society, we have a very important role in times of crisis: To help take the place of the non-functioning public institutions, at least in the immediate time-frame. After realizing how important psychologically it was for all of our employees to be able to return to routine, we organized an on-site day camp for their young children to enable them to come back to work. We also decided to start operating and opened our doors again to the general public, initially without any compensation.

**2 Pay attention to the changing needs of the field and organize accordingly.**

In order to remain significant and relevant, it is important to be attentive to the needs that arise from the field, and take advantage of our natural flexibility and agility in responding to them. With the outbreak of war: We immediately organized and went to hotels and evacuee centers with guided respite activities for families; we prepared self-guided kits to distribute to evacuee families; we provided online science classes for the education system until the establishment of temporary schools for the evacuees, at which point we changed direction and started teaching frontally in them instead.



**3 Knowledge is always an asset and power.** Thanks to our educational and scientific capabilities as a science museum, we have important assets that can strengthen social resilience. Immediately upon receiving permission from the Home Front Command, we opened the Museum's doors to evacuees and Jerusalem families alike, free of charge, if only to allow them a break from the daily news.



**4 Active learning can happen in surprising places.** We discovered that we have to think more broadly about how- and where- we can offer our activities. We operated in hotels; in libraries; in schools- and even at night on the promenade in Eilat, with the aim of providing educational activities and diversion to the many young people who had been relocated to the city because of the war.

**5 In times of crisis, community learning resources can be indispensable.** Based on the tools and content we developed as part of Make It Open, a EU-funded project that focuses on community involvement in STEM learning, we started a new project in collaboration with The Joint Israel and the Ministry of Education.



**6 Collaborations, collaborations, collaborations.** We cannot deal with crises alone. Our activity during the war highlighted the importance of forming collaborations and working together; Such joint activities multiply our power and the impact we can make even with limited resources. For example, we went to evacuee centers in the Dead Sea region for a joint activity with the National Library and the Israel Museum's youth wing.



**7 Recognizing the impact of a visit to a 'Cultural Institution'.** Thanks to the assistance of the Jerusalem Foundation's 'Double Impact' program, the Museum hosted thousands of students and teachers at the end of 2023; families and youth; young and old; evacuees and residents of Jerusalem. They toured the new exhibits; participated in the workshops; watched the scientific demonstrations, and on top of receiving an enriching scientific experience, enjoyed a much-needed day out.

We would like to thank all the foundations and donors who responded to our requests, who recognized the great importance of our war-related activities and who helped to cover the many costs: **Jerusalem Foundation, the Mandel-Israel Foundation; The Beracha Foundation, Matan – Investing in the Community; Intel; CheckPoint, and members of the Executive Committee.**

As a new year begins in the shadow of the ongoing war, we will continue our extensive activities in the Museum and in the community, in Jerusalem and beyond, and will continue to adapt our activity to best meet the changing needs of society.

As mentioned, the war greatly changed the focus of our activity, **but until 7.10 we operated in a wide variety of channels:**

## New and renewed exhibitions:

The **Gut** exhibition came to us straight from the Science Museum Paris after hosting hundreds of thousands of visitors. The exhibition was inspired by the global bestseller **Gut: The Inside Story of Our Body's Most Underrated Organ**. Written by Dr. Giulia Enders together with her sister Jill Enders and translated into 40 languages, the book deals with the most important, and perhaps maligned, organ in our body: the digestive system.

The exhibition offers visitors an experiential journey into the digestive system: They meet the bacteria that affect the quality of our lives; get to know the functions of the various organs; learn how different types of food affect our health, and discover what it means to have a food sensitivity. The exhibition covers approx. 600 square meters and contains dozens of interactive exhibits and related activities developed specially by the Museum team: An origami workshop that demonstrates how folding can allow something large to be placed in a small space, similar to the digestive system in the abdominal cavity; an interactive demonstration illustrating what happens to food from the moment it enters the mouth until it leaves the body; and a sandbox activity for preschoolers, where young visitors sorted bacteria and learned about the differently shaped poop.



Alongside the main exhibition, we displayed a **unique photo exhibition** of the various types of bacteria living around us. The spectacular photographs were collected and edited with the help of Prof. Bercovier from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Dr. Dror Bar-Nir from the Open University. Bacteria recycle remains; are responsible for the smells around us and have a hand in preparing food such as bread and dairy products; they interact with each other and communicate with their environment, animals and plants- all without being visible to the naked eye. In this exhibit, bacteria were given a place of honor with enlarged photographs of different types of bacteria.





### The freedom to create - a new original exhibition

The exhibition was developed from scratch by the Museum team with the aim of celebrating the digital production revolution and presenting the many ways and meanings of creating a customized product.



Prof. Dov Ganchrow, from Bezalel's Industrial Design Department and Dr. Amir Ben-Shalom, head of the Museum's exhibition development department, jointly curated the exhibition. The exhibition was set-up like a typical pavilion-based craft's fair. Each pavilion 'matched' a well-known traditional craft that has undergone a modernization with an important aspect of digital production, presenting them side-by-side in interactive displays and showcases. The exhibition delves into innovative technologies and various types of 3D printing, including familiar 3D printing materials such as plastic as well as more surprising ones like aluminum, titanium, sand and wood. It presents new possibilities for providing quick solutions to medical and environmental problems, and it raises topical ethical issues such as copyright; the printing of weapons; intellectual property and more.

As part of our spring events, the exhibition of photographs of rare trees, was presented in collaboration with the Jerusalem University's Botanical Garden. Dr. Ori Fragman-Sapir, the scientific director of the garden and a nature photographer, chose to present 20 species of rare wild trees that grow in the area, about half of which are in danger of extinction.



## We led:

In September, we finished a fascinating 3 years of leading Make It Open, a EU-funded project that aims to enlist the community in STEM learning in schools. Together with partners from 12 European countries, we created learning challenges that are relevant to the world of the learners and delivered them through unique pedagogical and digital tools that involve community stakeholders.

[Click here for the Make It Open website](#)

During the school year we: Implemented the activity in 21 schools in Israel (and about 140 schools in Europe); created active teacher communities; helped teachers navigate the new pathways of the pedagogy and content we created; we encouraged teachers to use the project's online navigation platform ('the navigator') that makes the content and resources accessible in a friendly and interactive way in Hebrew (and nine other languages); we developed a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) for teachers and educators, in which hundreds of teachers from Europe and Israel took part; and we activated our wide network of 15 European associations and other partners who are all involved in the field of schools open to the community / open schooling.

[Click here for the online navigation platform 'The Navigator'](#)

At the end of the school year, we marked the success of the project in several ways: We collected the insights and knowledge gained in the project in a **tool kit for a school open to the community**; We initiated a **Policy Event** in the EU buildings in Brussels – and invited representatives from our 15 partners, schools open to the community, and decision and policy makers from the European Union for a joint discussion of the results of the project and recommendations for the future. Following the event, we submitted policy recommendations to EU representatives, and we hope that at least some of them will influence decision makers in Brussels.

[Click here for the policy recommendations document](#)



## We presented at conferences throughout Europe

As part of the **Make it Open** project, the Museum gained valuable new tools and knowledge. As part of the project's pledge, we participated in many conferences in Israel and Europe with the aims of sharing them with others; learning from the experience of our colleagues, and forming together new ideas for future action.

In April, Omer Gaist, from the Museum's education and development team, participated in the annual conference of **PCST** – the Global Network for Science Communication, which was held in Rotterdam in the Netherlands. Omer presented the insights we gained from the **Make it Open** project by listening to the voices of young people within the framework of open education for the community, in order to make them active contributors in the joint creation of knowledge.



In May, Roey Kafri, from the Museum's education and development team, participated in the **Educating the Educators** conference that took place in Leiden in the Netherlands. Roey presented about the role of the teachers in the project, as well as the materials developed for this important community.

In June, Rony Ben-Chaim, then-VP of Operations and Projects; Dr. Amir Ben-Shalom, Head of Exhibit Development; and Maya Halevy, then-CEO of the Museum participated in the **annual conference of ECSITE, the European Network of Science Centres and Museums**, held in Malta. Over the years, the Museum has been a very active member of **ECSITE** and routinely participates in its various projects. As part of the conference, we presented the **Make it Open** project in several sessions, and organized a workshop day for those interested in the field with the aim of sharing the insights, knowledge and tools we have developed. At the end of June, we initiated a policy event **in Brussels**, with representatives from the European Union's framework program and partners from various associations that promote the approach of schools open to the community. Dr. Chagit Tishler, the Museum's VP of Education and Development, and Maya Halevy, the museum's CEO at the time, represented the Museum at the event and shared the products and insights created as part of the project.

The Science Museum is also an active member of the **EUSEA organization** – a European organization that focuses on developing and implementing tools to create public involvement in the fields of science and society. Rony Ben-Chaim, former Vice Director of the Museum and currently its Executive Director, serves as a member of the organization's executive committee. Etti Oron, outgoing head of content development, and Rony Ben-Chaim represented the Museum in May at the organization's annual conference held in Bolzano, Italy. They presented how the Museum uses a variety of educational methods as part of interactive workshops to reach different types of learners.





## We hosted:

In March, as part of the Science Month events, we hosted astronaut **Dr. Jeffrey Hoffman**, a longtime friend of the Museum who currently serves as a professor of aeronautics at **MIT** in Boston. Dr. Hoffman came to us for a return visit, exactly 30 years after he installed the mezuzah he took on one of his first flights into space on the Museum's front door. As part of the event, we screened a film about the connections Dr. Hoffman makes between space and Judaism, and the former astronaut told a rapt audience about his experiences during his five flights into space (a very impressive record!).



## And don't forget:

For the opening of the **Gut** exhibition, we hosted the **Enders sisters** from Germany for an open panel discussion. The **Gut** exhibition, developed by the **Universcience museum in Paris** and displayed since last July in our museum, is based on the best-selling book written by Dr. Guilia Enders, a physician and microbiologist, and her sister, Jill Enders.

The book deals with that all-important organ that is at the center of the latest medical research but that suffers from bad PR– the digestive system. In the panel, which was moderated by Dr. Eran Blacher, from the Institute of Life Sciences at the Hebrew University, we learned about the dialogue that took place between the sisters in the process of writing the book, and about how Guilia's work as a doctor and researcher served as a foundation for her humorous writing.



### • Knowledge-a-thon

As part of a collaboration with the Jerusalem Municipality's Education Directorate, the Museum hosted the annual Beta Educators Knowledge-a-thon. In this framework, hundreds of residents of the city were hosted at the Museum; teachers and students worked together in groups with the help of mentors to create solutions to real-world social challenges. At the end of the process, the groups presented their projects to a panel of judges who selected the projects that would be implemented by experts.

### • Jerusalem research fairs

The Urban Research Fair is an event that presents the best scientific and technological research projects of Jerusalem 6th and 9th grade students. The fair summarizes the learning process the students went through during the year under the guidance of their teachers, and presents through designed posters one or two works chosen to represent each school. The best works are selected to represent the city of Jerusalem at the national fair. After a break of several years, this year we also held a research fair for East Jerusalem students which was attended by students from both the Israeli and Palestinian education systems. This year's fair was attended by the Mayor of Jerusalem, Moshe Lion; The director of the Jerusalem Municipalities Education Administration, Yoav (Zimi) Zimran; and many other honored guests.

### • Teacher conferences

The Museum is the home of science teachers from Jerusalem and the surrounding area, and as such it hosts the conferences of teachers from Jerusalem and the Jerusalem of the ministry of Education. The primary school teachers' conference this year dealt with extracurricular education – the teachers toured various sites in the city before gathering at the Museum to hear a lecture on **artificial intelligence (AI)** from our science director Guy Groves and to tour the **Gut** exhibit. The middle school teachers' conference focused on the themes of the exhibition **Gut**; In addition to a tour and demonstration, the teachers heard about programs offered by the Ministry of Education in the field of digital platforms.





## We supported scientific education:

### Science sessions

Science sessions are a one-time, two-hour educational visit for kindergartens and schools. Although topics vary, the sessions illustrate the applications of science and technology in everyday life in a way adapted to the curricula and the different age groups. The sessions include an interactive demonstration of scientific experiments in which the students are encouraged to ask questions, hypothesize and even perform tasks; tours in which the guides create connections between the principles and phenomena demonstrated to every-day life; and a research and construction workshop where the students apply the knowledge they have acquired. Science sessions are offered on a wide variety of topics, depending on the current exhibitions, and are updated and improved each year in accordance with teacher feedback. In the activity catalog, teachers can choose between topics such as converting energy; Think and Calculate, as well as new themes developed around the current exhibitions **The Freedom to Create** and **Gut**. As in previous years, tens of thousands of students from all parts of Israeli society visited and participated in the science sessions: From the Arab sector, from general Jewish sector and from the ultra-orthodox sector.

**Scratch Jr** is a program intended to teach programming to children aged 5-7. The program was developed at **MIT** in Boston as a tool for teaching early computational thinking; Users create a **graphical user interface (GUI)** with characters and **logic**. Instead of writing code, children visually drag and drop '**blocks**'. This year the Museum was invited to become a member of the global Scratch community (**SEC- Scratch Education Collaborative**), which deals with the cultural and language adaptation of **Scratch JR's** teaching systems into Arabic, with the goal of enabling early education teachers to use it to teach Arabic-speaking children the principles of computational thinking and coding.

### Learning Spaces

The museum as a school – an educational and learning space for teachers and students. As part of a groundbreaking program initiated and supported by the Jerusalem Foundation, 18 classes from west and east Jerusalem came for six days of study at the museum over the course of the year. The structured activities are tailored to the nature of the school and the curriculum, and are planned and delivered by Museum guides in partnership with the teachers. As part of the program, the students carried out a project on topics chosen by the teachers.



## We published and distributed:

The international scientific journal **Frontiers: for Young People**, published in Hebrew by the Museum under the scientific direction of Prof. Idan Segev from the Hebrew University and with the support of the Sagol Foundation, continued to expand. More than 700 Hebrew articles written by leading scientists from Israel and the world and reviewed by adolescents were published on the Frontiers website and are available to read free of charge. In addition, the Nobel Prize Collection, a collection of 20 articles written with Nobel Prize winners about their ground-breaking research, was also published on the site.

[Click here for Frontiers Science for Young People](#)



During the year, the Museum promoted the assimilation of the Ministry of Education's Learning Scenario in the field of climate change, which was prepared on the basis of articles published in Frontiers. Towards the end of the year, the Scenario was translated into Arabic, and it will serve as the infrastructure for an educational activity that the Museum will conduct with East Jerusalem students.



In May, as part of the Education Week events in Jerusalem, a special seminar was held at the Hebrew University with 200 students and teachers under the title **Hungry for Science**. Speakers included Aviv Halfon, a doctoral student at the Faculty of Medicine, who presented an article dealing with research on the subject of satiety, and Efrat Lichtenstadt, owner of the blog 'So, what do you do all day?' who revealed the secrets of food photography (which also- surprisingly- causes a feeling of satiety). The main event this year was a plenary session attended by about a thousand participants that took place as part of the annual conference of the Israeli Association for Ecology and Environmental Sciences. In this session, the activities of **Frontiers for Young People** were presented to researchers in the field, with the aim of recruiting them to write articles for the journal about their research.





## We promoted excellence:

**The Israel Young Scientists and Developers Competition** was held for the 26th year. Youth from all over the country and from all parts of society submitted research papers, 72 of which made it to the final stage. The ceremony announcing the winners was held at the Hebrew University, and the winners represented Israel in international competitions in Europe and the USA and participated in research camps in Europe. In the USA competition this year, Lior Rogev won second prize and the prize on behalf of the American Patent Office, and in the European competition, Shahar Perlman and Yonatan Halperin won a special prize and the opportunity to participate in a forum for outstanding young scientists in Switzerland.

Projects that advanced to the final stage are presented on the Museum's revamped website accompanied by short explanatory videos, with the aim of encouraging other students to engage in research and exposing them to the many diverse fields of knowledge and the overlap that exists between them in the world of research and academia.



### **Excellence in Technological Education**

is a unique three-year program initiated and led by the Director of Technological Education at the Ministry of Education. The purpose of the program is to provide a response to outstanding students who wish to take part in research projects dealing with issues that are at the forefront of technology, in addition to and as part of their regular studies.

In recent years, museum staff has assisted the Ministry of Education in formulating the outline of the program. This year, the first cohort of students who participated in the program won numerous awards at the 'Young Scientists and Developers Competition' with their high-quality technological projects.



## We collaborated with:

### The University Botanical Garden - Plant Science Camp

The 'Plant Science' summer camp took place for the third year. The summer camp is a collaboration between the Museum and the Givat Ram Botanical Garden; In the cool morning hours the activity takes place in the botanical garden, and in the afternoon hours the children take part in activities at the Museum. Every day revolves around a selected theme, for example: detective day, color and light day, etc. This year, the camp was aimed at 3rd-5th graders and included three Hebrew-speaking groups and one Arabic-speaking group.

### Scientific Urban Advantage

For the past decade, The Scientific Urban Advantage program, initiated and managed by the Museum in cooperation with the Jerusalem Municipalities' Education Directorate, has supported scientific and technological research projects for students in grades 6-9. The program takes place in five informal science and nature education centers throughout Jerusalem: The Biblical Zoo; the Station for Bird Research; the Givat Ram Botanical Garden; the Musrara Greenhouse and the Science Museum, and offers teachers and their students the opportunity to acquire research skills and carry out a research project as required in the science and technology curriculum. The program expands the range of research topics; gives teachers extra guidance skills and introduces students to interesting and motivating topics, while at the same time exposing them to the variety of organizations and possibilities that the city of Jerusalem has to offer in the STEM fields.

### The Hebrew University and the Center for Educational Technology- Citizen Science

'Engaged Jerusalem' is a citizen science educational program supported by the Jerusalem Foundation's innovation fund. The program is intended for both the students of the education system and the community. In collaboration with two centers of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem: **the sustainability center and the GIS center (The Center for Information Systems and Geographical Science)**, the Museum developed a set of sensors that measure climate and air quality indicators and a platform that transmits the information to a Global Positioning System (GPS), allowing the surveyor to see the data on a regional map. This year, a complete set of instructions was written to allow teachers to guide their students through the tests, without needing to be accompanied by Museum staff. During the year, about two hundred participants, most of them middle school students and senior volunteers from the botanical garden, took environmental measurements and researched the effects of various factors on the measured indicators. The teaching system was adopted by the Center for Educational Technology and was uploaded to a national platform for students all over the country.

We also worked with Lotem (Nature Accessible to All), an organization that deals with the accessibility of public parks and trails, and at their request during the war we held a Zoom meeting for people with special needs. The meeting was in great demand, and many families and educational institutions attended.

### JLM Spark - Innovation Centers

As part of collaboration in the field of MAKE, the Museum developed a class for couples together with the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center of the Jerusalem Municipality, JLM SPARK. As part of the activity, there were eight meetings for couples on Friday mornings at the JLM SPARK center in Katamon. In each session, participants learned to work with digital tools such as laser cutters, 3D printers and manual tools. The participants designed and created a unique and useful product: sandblasted glassware; individually designed LED lamps; wall clocks and more.



## We continued to provide a tailored response to our diverse audience:

We invest much thought and many development hours in creating activities and events suitable for a heterogeneous audience and a wide age range. During the year we held several events on different topics; On Passover we dealt with wood as a material; In the summer, we held activities that related to the **Gut** exhibition, and on Hanukkah, in addition to the theme of fire, we launched the **Freedom to Create** exhibition. Other events for families included Israeli space week; Independence Day; Museum Day, and a special activity for Purim.

We continue to hold special events geared to specific audiences; During the year we held seven 'Quiet Times' – special events where families of children with disabilities are invited to come to the Museum at a discounted price and take part in specially adapted activities. During Quiet Time, the Museum is closed to the general public, enabling families of children with disabilities to enjoy a multitude of activities, workshops and demonstrations that allow the children's full participation. We also participated in the **city's Special Needs Week**, and offered modified tours of the Museum for families with children with special needs on weekday afternoons.

The Museum holds three unique events for families from the Arab community during the winter holidays, on the holiday of al-Fitr and the Eid al-Adha. These events are chosen according to the holidays and vacations of the Arab sector, and the content is delivered in Arabic and culturally adapted. The marketing is focused on the Arab sector, and we use Arabic-speaking influencers to promote the activity and reach as many people as possible. These events were a great success, attracting both residents of Jerusalem and the surrounding area as well as residents of the center and the north, who came expressly for them. We plan on holding similar events in 2024 as well.



## Looking ahead:

The big challenge we face now is expanding the Museum to include the fields of nature and the environment and the creation of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary connections, with the aim of presenting natural phenomena and the principles of environmental science alongside relevant developments in technology and industry. This expansion will: Allow visitors a curious and in-depth look at the natural treasures and the biological and scenic diversity of the Land of Israel; provide an interdisciplinary picture of the science behind today's environmental discourse; and invite the general public to take part in the fascinating and sometimes exciting adventures of uncovering and deciphering the secrets of nature.

The new wings will add value to the visit to the Museum and will open a window to other interesting areas of thought for the audience. With the support of the Mayor of Jerusalem, and with the assistance of the Jerusalem Foundation, the design of the building will be carried out by the architectural firm Shwartz Besnosoff and S.O Architects, accompanied by many professional consultants, alongside in-depth work on the displays and contents.

## Farewell (on a personal note)

In 1983, 40 years ago, I joined Prof. Peter Hillman to help fulfill his vision to establish a science museum in Israel! Nine years later, in 1992, we inaugurated the Museum in its current location- on Sderot HaMuze'onim in Givat Ram. For more than a decade I was Peter's right-hand woman and his deputy, and from 1995 I led the Museum as CEO. Over the years I faced many challenges, curated exhibitions, initiated diverse projects, promoted multiple collaborations in Israel and abroad, but most of all enjoyed working with a wonderful team of special people, in this magical place called the Science Museum, to dream dreams and see (most of them) come true, to initiate, create, try, make mistakes, try again and hope that we were able to touch many people, big and small- to arouse their curiosity, to inspire them to ask questions, to deepen their understanding, and above all, to love science. I am leaving this special place, which has become a second-home for so many, with plenty of memories and with lots of friends.

The Museum has many more plans to expand and grow, change and adapt, and I wish Rony Ben-Chaim, the new CEO, great success in leading our special museum forward safely.

**Maya Halevy**  
the retiring CEO



## Nice to meet you

I arrived at the Science Museum eight years ago after working in different fields, and immediately felt that it was a different kind of place. It very quickly became a home for me. Each day I am uplifted to see how the staff works together in a free and creative atmosphere, proud to see the positive impact of the Museum on education and culture in Jerusalem and Israel, and thrilled to meet visitors and hear how they are inspired by the Museum, its exhibitions and activities. The Museum has achieved so much in its thirty years, and I look forward to seeing what else we can do.

I accepted the position of Museum Director with enthusiasm and a sense of great responsibility, and I intend to continue working side by side with our great team and our partners as we build the future together.

On this occasion, I would like to give special thanks to Maya Halevy, the outgoing CEO, who managed the Museum for all its years and handed over to me a first-rate cultural institution. It is a real honor to continue on your path.

**Rony Ben-Chaim**  
Incoming CEO



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