

# Knowledge Center for Innovation

Our mission at the **Knowledge Center for Innovation** is to promote innovation in Israeli industry as a lever for growth and leadership in global markets. Creativity is embedded in the DNA of Israeli culture. However, there is need for an environment that stimulates innovation and enables it to flourish. The Knowledge Center for Innovation designs the environment for innovation by creating synergy among three sectors - industry, academia and government. Government policies, as well as academic institutes enhance innovation through top-down processes that provide the knowledge, support and incentive needed for innovation. Industry, together with Academe, stimulate innovation through bottom-up processes driven by motivated individuals, teams and organizations, by educating them in how to activate the innovation process and manage it from the ideation to the implementation phase. The Innovation Center, located at **Technion** – Israel, was established in 2008 through the generous support of the Ministry of Science & Technology, and is now an independent center.



## The Knowledge Center for Innovation model for stimulating and managing the innovation process.

The metaphor of "**the journey of an idea**" captures the innovation center model for stimulating and managing the innovation process. It is a multi-phase, non-linear process for progressing from the ideation phase to the implementation phase, back to the ideation phase and vice versa. The journey begins with identifying a specific problem, which is often derived from clear market needs, threats from competitors, availability of raw material and suppliers, or company's needs. The process continues generating ideas for a solution, choosing a concept for implementation, mobilizing it in the organization towards execution, manufacturing, and releasing the final product to the user, whether it is business-to-business or business-to-consumer. At each of these stages innovation might be needed in the form of new technology, products, processes, business models or management. This model serves as a guide for KCI initiatives. All our initiatives aim to change the mindset from a focus on a day-to-day "fire-fighting" to a future orientation, envisioning where the enterprise should be in the future in order to become an industry leader. Our initiatives aim at sharing new knowledge with the organizations, assimilating it and utilizing it in innovative projects. Below are the key KCI initiatives.



### Knowledge Center for the Study of Innovation

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# Major innovation-enhancement initiatives led by the Innovation center

The Innovation Center encompasses three major tracks: research, knowledge base of methods and best practices to enhance innovation, and implementation of innovation programs to industry.

## 1. Research

The Innovation Center leads national and international studies, including a longitudinal study for identifying the obstacles in the journey of the idea within the enterprise, factors that inhibit or facilitate innovation of small and medium size enterprises in peripheral areas and a multi-national study on the effect of multicultural teams on innovation.

## 2. Knowledge Base

The Innovation Center's website - <http://innovation.technion.ac.il> is a unique knowledge base on innovation. It contains a collection of important articles from updated scientific journals; measures of various aspects of innovation, at different levels in the organization; methods of enhancing innovation; lists of academic courses on innovation in Israel, and much more.

## 3. Major KCI initiatives

**Managing Innovation forum:** senior managers from approximately 40 leading Israeli companies meet once a month at the Technion, to listen to lectures by senior Israeli managers, learn the latest academic knowledge, encounter a variety of methods for enhancing innovation in organizations and most important - to meet, share and create an innovative and synergistic network, which crosses industrial sectors.

**Students' 4<sup>th</sup> year projects of technological and business innovation in industry:** The project, initiated and led by KCI aims to promote innovation in medium size enterprises in Israel, and to expose engineering students to these industries.

**Organizational Consulting for innovation:** the innovation center advises selected organizations on enhancing their

innovation performance. Among them industrial companies, Hi-Tech organizations and elite units at the IDF.

**Moving Up:** a unique innovation management education program for executives from heavy industry companies, led by the innovation center in cooperation with the Neaman Institute at the Technion. Its objectives are to give managers knowledge, tools and methodologies for managing innovation processes, and upgrading products, services and processes through innovation; to create a framework for cooperation between the participants in the program, and to develop and implement innovative and measurable projects at the participating companies. An initial cycle for seven companies was completed in October and a new cycle is now beginning.

**Information Center for R&D P<sup>3</sup> Magnet Consortium:** the consortium for the development of advanced food plastic packaging, is unique in incorporating 7 organizations in the plastic industry and academic researchers from a number of institutes, supported by the Chief Scientist of the Ministry of Industry, Trade & Labor.

**Case Studies:** a number of cases in the Israeli industry can serve as an inspiration and a source of learning for other companies. We collect and document success stories of Israeli companies, documenting the knowledge accumulated on their long-term path to successful innovation and utilize it as a model for other companies.

**The Committee for empowering traditional industry:** The innovation center took an active part in this committee, which aims to promote the empowerment of traditional industries as part of "Israel 2028" program initiated by the Neaman Institute. This program outlined a national vision to bring the State of Israel to be among the 15 leading countries in terms of GNP per capita.

## Our Team



**Prof. Miriam Erez** initiated and established the Knowledge Center for Innovation in 2008, and has served as chairperson of the Center since. In 2005 she received the Israel Prize for Management Sciences, and in 2002 won the prize of the International Association of Applied Psychology. Her research focuses on innovation, intercultural management and motivation at work. Among her activities she serves as Chair of the National Council for the Advancement of Women in science and technology, she serves on the board of the Haifa Economic Corporation and on the board of the Hi-Center incubator in Haifa. Miriam Erez is Honorary member of the American Academy of Management and the American Psychological Association.



**Dr. Iris Arbel**, Director of the Knowledge Center for Innovation, has a PhD from the Technion; in her doctorate she developed and implemented a group intervention for increasing innovation in teams. Iris has expertise and extensive experience in building teams and developing inter-personal skills at variety of organizations.



**Yaara Ben-Nahum** has a master degree in organizational psychology at the Technion, with a focus on the study of innovation and culture. Yaara is responsible for the center's virtual activity, and particularly enjoys writing Case Studies. Prior to joining KCI she worked as a business intelligence analyst, Chinese translator and content editor.