11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE



The Israeli representatives at the World Cultural Festival (Credit: Michal Golan)

RESEARCH

A World First: The Cairo Geniza Goes Digital

As part of the ERC SYNERGY MiDRASH Project, in which the 'Eliyahu Lab' at the University of Haifa is a key partner, the first version of the complete computerized transcription of all the Cairo Geniza manuscripts is being published online. The release, as was reported worldwide, is the result of over a decade of research.

The World's First Nursing Home Unearthed

Dr. Michael Eisenberg and Dr. Arleta Kowalewska (Zinman Institute of Archaeology) with Prof. Gregor Staab of the University of Cologne, excavating at ancient Hippos (Sussita), found a Greek mosaic inscription bearing the blessing "Peace upon the Elders." It may be the oldest archaeologically dated elder-care institution ever discovered (Byzantine period, 5th-6th centuries CE).

An Incredible Find from the Deep

University of Haifa student Shlomi Katsin made a remarkable accidental discovery while swimming off Dor Beach: a 900-year-old Crusader-era sword on the seafloor. Reported to Professor Debi Tsveikal and the Israel Antiquities Authority, it was recovered, conserved at the Leon Recanati Institute of Maritime Studies and CT-scanned at Medical Elisha Hospital.

Academia Supporting Communities in Emergencies

Prof. Einat Shofer Engelhard and Dr. Maya Volkan (School of Creative Arts Therapies) received a 50,000 NIS grant through the 2026 Impact Call for Academia Supporting Communities in Emergencies, a training program for emergency aid workers to strengthen the resilience of families and young children through a research-based mind-body intervention.

Art, Identity, and Shared Society: The Living Room Study Group Final Exhibition

The Unit for Social Engagement (Dean of Students Office) and *Beit HaGefen* celebrated the conclusion of the "Living Room Study Group" program with a multicultural art exhibition by students from diverse backgrounds working with local artists, exploring identity, self-expression and coexistence. Attended by Dean of Students Prof. Batya Engel-Yeger and Beit HaGefen CEO Asaf Ron, it was curated by Ayman Dao.

Preserving Shikmona's Heritage for Future Generations

The Zinman Institute of Archaeology plays a leading role in the research, conservation and development of Shikmona National Park, preserving the site for the local community and visitors. Its Byzantine heritage is closely linked to the region's early Christian population and remains significant to Christian communities today.

World Cultural Festival 2025 in India

Ms. Michal Golan (School of the Arts) represented Israel at the *World Cultural Festival 2025* in India, with five Israeli musicians including Hagar Eshel, a master's student in composition, highlighting the university's role in cultural exchange.

Strong Presence for the University of Haifa at Tel Aviv Fashion Week 2025

The School of Design was prominently represented at *Tel Aviv Fashion Week 2025*:


Chef Asaf Granit wearing a design created by Aharon Genish, from the School of Design (Credit: School of Design)

faculty and alumni showcased collections, and Fashion Design students presented original work in a Morocco-inspired exhibition.

LEARNING AND STUDENTS

A New International MA Program

UHaifa International's Heritage Management Master's program focuses on preserving archaeological, historical and cultural legacies, with hands-on training and partnerships with UNESCO, ICOMOS, Israel's Antiquities Authority and the National Nature & Parks Authority. The program is housed in the School of Archaeology and Maritime Cultures (SAMC), the first to integrate land, sea and lab research.

Haifa Hosts Global Israel Studies Summit

The University hosted the annual conference of the Association for Israel Studies (AIS), with about 500 researchers, led by Dr. Tal Almaliach, Dr. David Barak-Gorodetsky and Dr. Assaf Shamis. It featured academic panels, an opening session on Haifa chaired by Prof. Yossi Ben-Artzi (2025 "Yakir Haifa" honoree), a doctoral colloquium with Indian scholars and city tours.

Preserving the Past: A Unique Heritage Conservation Course in Haifa

The Division of External Studies launched the second cohort of the "Heritage Site Conservation Trustees" course, with the Council for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in Israel and led by Dr. Assaf Selzer. The only course of its kind in northern Israel, it covers architecture, conservation engineering, tourism and community studies.

OPERATIONS

The Scenic Lounge Opens at the Nazarian Library

The University unveiled the "Scenic Lounge," a multifunctional space in the Nazarian Library for lectures, cultural events and open study, with a campus view and adjacent to the Nazarian Art Gallery. Designed by university architect Diana Shkolnik Goren and renovated by the Engineering and Operations Division headed by Ronen Chitterer.

The Reading Team

The Children and Youth Library, part of the Nazarian Library, launches "The Reading Team", a free monthly club for children in grades 3-6, held on Wednesdays (advance registration required).

Light, Space, and View: UHaifa's Architecture Department Gets a New Floor

The School of Design inaugurated the rebuilt fourth floor of the Architecture Department, with light-filled learning spaces overlooking the Carmel, the Bahá'í Gardens and the German Colony.