



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



BEZALEL Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem
Graduate School, Department of Architecture
UNESCO Chair in Urban Design and Conservation Studies

Proposal for the four-year programme of the UNESCO Chair at Bezalel – 2021-2025

1. Background

- This proposal builds on the successful actions of the chair over the past fifteen years
- and highlights the interrelationships between the UNESCO mid-term strategy and
- relevant international mechanisms in the field of urban design and heritage
- conservation on one hand and the role of the UNESCO Chair in research and
- dissemination in Israel on the other.

Objectives

The purpose of the Chair shall be to promote an integrated system of research, training, information and documentation in the fields of urban design and conservation studies.

It will serve as a means of facilitating collaboration between high-level, internationally recognized researchers and teaching staff of the Academy and other institutions in Israel and elsewhere in Europe, and in other regions of the world.

UNESCO

The main strand of the UNESCO Chair programme is in the mid-term strategy and focusing on the activities of the Culture Sector at large and the World Heritage Centre in particular. As charge de mission to the Director for Heritage and the World Heritage Centre, the UNESCO Chair anticipates assisting UNESCO in representing the sector in events and activities that cannot be staffed.

As part of the 2022-2029 medium-term strategy draft resolution (41 C/4) of reaffirming the abiding relevance of UNESCO's mandate to the achievement of sustainable development and international peace, three main areas of focus have been identified under the heading of *Culture as an Enabler for Sustainable Development*: Urban Heritage, Heritage of Religious Interest and Urban Sustainability and Resilience. Within each of these fields there are a series of programmes that have been prioritized including, inter alia, the *Culture Urban Future*, Impact Assessment, the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, the UNHabitat 2016 New Urban Agenda, the Metropolis, mobility, migrations and transformations .



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Bezael – Urban Design Graduate Programme

- The UNESCO Chair is an essential part of the Urban Design Graduate Programme providing research topics for faculty and students and international connections and collaborations, as well as promoting the Sustainable Development Goals and delivering on its international commitments in education, culture, communication and information.
- The *Learning from Jerusalem course / Al-Quds International Summer Program* is a key component in the programme and is planned to be extended as a joint activity with other historic cities during the coming years. In addition, the UNESCO Chair in supporting this course will reach out to other exchange programmes; based on the EU-ERASMUS+ project, a joint master's degree in conservation with Sapienza University, Rome and The National Technical University of Athens (NTUA), Greece will be developed during 2021-2023.

Further strengthening the activities in urban design and heritage conservation as a cross-cutting subject and the harmonisation of the HUL Recommendation and the Action Framework for the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda are expected to continue. New courses within this framework of Urban Innovation are expected to be developed, and collaborations with offices such as the Ministry of Housing concerning Continuing Professional Development (CPD) will be promoted as in the past.

Regarding the activities of MUNCH, Mediterranean UNESCO Chairs. discussions are taking place to review the possible future activities within the UNITWIN framework and generate a new integrative programme. Members of the UNESCO chairs of the Mediterranean region include the University of Ferrara, Università Iuav di Venezia, La Sapienza University of Rome, University of Arts Belgrade, the University of Cyprus, the Istanbul Studies Center at Kadir Has University and Universitat de Lleida.

Further research concerning the role of culture in promoting urban sustainability and to develop an understanding of how cities can become resilient to the consequences of war, pandemics, conflicts, social transformations and migrations, as well as documentation and capacity building, is being conducted through EU funding and



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- national grants. These researches¹ that were initiated by the UNESCO Chair in order to
- facilitate the confrontation, dialogue and cross fertilization between different cultures
- will continue in the next quadrennial.
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- Current research and teaching activities will continue, and it is hoped to extend the
- involvement of other faculty in the activities of the UNESCO Chair. The Chair will be
- held by Professor Michael Turner and Professor Els Verbakel as head of the Urban
- Design programme. A new young researcher will join the UNESCO Chair activities Adi
- Sela Weiner, an architect with a post-graduate degree from Rutgers University in
- Cultural Heritage and Preservation Studies.

Sustainable Development Goals

The UNESCO Chair at Bezelel will take a key role focusing on Goal 11 – making our cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. As charge de mission to the Director for Heritage and the World Heritage Centre, the UNESCO Chair will assist UNESCO in representing the sector in events and activities that could not be staffed.

UNHabitat

As a lead-up to UNHabitat III and WUF 10, the Graduate Programme in Urban Design played a central role in the developing of a National Urban Forum in Israel. The Israel Urban Forum was created in order to provide a wider platform for a cross-sectorial and interdisciplinary debate on the topics of city and urbanity.

The Graduate Programme in Urban Design continues to take a lead in developing the local network, bringing together representatives from different communities in Israel, alongside academics, NGOs, local authorities, residents, activists and students for a series of intensive round table discussions to investigate and challenge current practices in the field of civic engagement in urban change.

The UNESCO Chair is a currently a member of UNI, the partnership between UN-Habitat and universities worldwide. The UNESCO Chair will take on a major role to research and support the integration of the *New Urban Agenda* with the *UNESCO*

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- ¹ a. HERILAND, Work Package on shifting demographies and contested identities, EU – Marie-Curie
b. Heritage and the Metropolis, UNHabitat
c. EDICULA, EU - Erasmus
d. CONSIDER, EU – Marie-Curie
e. Jordan River Peace Project, EcoPeace
f. Cultural Landscapes and Crop Wild Relatives, Yad Hanadiv Foundation
g. PAUC with industrial design, Inter-governmental Committee for Earthquake Preparedness
h. Jerusalem Archive , Jerusalem Development Authority
i. Israel 100 – sustainable development, Ministry of Interior,
j. Documenting Modern Heritage, Ministry of Heritage
k. Drop of Milk, Van Leer Foundation



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- *Culture Urban Future* with other UNESCO mechanisms in the SDG Decade for Action 2020-2030 by coordinating a new innovative UNHabitat university metro-hub on the Metropolis, Urban Design and Culture.
- During this period, the UNESCO Chair with the Graduate Programme will highlight issues of urban-rural linkages and the metropolis (paragraphs 90, 96, 115, 117, 144 and 156 of the *New Urban Agenda*) and the role of cultural identities.
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UNDRR

The Resilient Cities Campaign is a key activity that needs to be better integrated in the many UN mechanisms. It is proposed to look at resilience in the wider framework of socio-economic implications and develop good practice for urban design.

The UNESCO Chair completed a decade of activities as advocate to the Resilient Cities Programme and will continue to work at the National level through the relevant governmental agencies. This will continue within the new MCR-2030 (Making Cities Resilient -2030) initiative providing input in the cultural scorecard.

Towards 2025

A four-year plan to 2025 will be an important contribution both at international and national fora as this is a watershed year at the international and national levels allowing for a more retrospective evaluation of visions and goals that were set in previous years.

At the international level, this will be the first five years of the UN Decade for Action of the *Sustainable Development Goals* and the global sample for the *New Urban Agenda* strategy 2020-2023 and therefore allow for the evaluation of the major issues being addressed.

In Israel, during 1989, spurred by the massive wave of immigration into Israel and by the dawn of the post-industrial information revolution new forms and ideas of planning are essential. Currently national interests are working towards a plan for Israel 100, addressing the challenges of hyper urbanization, and promoting idea of managing our cities innovatively using effective planning and design, and applying the principles of connectedness, inclusivity and resilience to deliver integrated results.

2. Action plan



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- **Continuing activities:**
- Teaching and developing integrative research
- Support for UNESCO activities
- Mediterranean network
- Israel Urban Forum
- Establishing an urban think-tank

Proposed Projects:

These will be developed with national and international partners and will prioritise:
Monitoring indicators for the UN Sustainable Development Goals – Goal 11;
Integrating the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda with the *UNESCO Culture Urban Future* through the Metro-Hub on the Metropolis, urban design and culture.

Research topics will focus on:

- Mobility
- The metropolis and the peri-urban spaces
- Urban sustainability and resilience – urban case-studies

The research topics will be evaluated after the first two-years and adjusted to the outcomes.

3. Budget

The financial contribution to the UNESCO Chair from the Bezalel Academy includes a component part of the salary of the UNESCO Chairholder and support for research assistants on a project-by-project basis within a proposed annual sum of \$25,000. With the establishment of a new Research Centre in the Academy, further resources may be made available. Specific activities are supported in kind and with funds for expenses.

Jerusalem, February 2021



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