



## OFANIM AT A GLANCE



*I never teach my pupils. I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.* *Albert Einstein*

### WHO WE ARE

Ofanim is an award-winning Israeli non-profit that is literally driving STEM education forward. Established in 2004, it brings state-of-the-art mobile STEM classrooms and science labs to children from third to seventh grade in underserved communities in Israel's northern and southern peripheries. For many, it is their first exposure to hands-on 21st century science and technology enrichment activities.

Ofanim's high-quality, innovative programs reach over 4,000 children in 63 communities. It promotes equal educational opportunity and embraces diversity across all social, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Alongside STEM education, Ofanim gives children the self-confidence and growth mindset that drive motivation and achievement.



### HOW WE WORK

Ofanim's five mobile lab and four mini-lab STEM buses travel the breadth and width of Israel to bring state-of-the-art science, technology and computer labs directly to under resourced cities, towns and villages. Children board the Ofanim bus and enter the exciting world of science, technology, computers, 3D printing, animation and more, and engage in real-time, hands-on activities and experiments.

The six different STEM programs range from computerized animation to coding, 3D printing, gaming and bio-medicine. They are taught by a team of highly trained university students who are dedicated to social change and encourage a love for learning and education. They inspire children to reach higher, go further and open the door to the possibility of higher education and learning critical skills for their futures.

Recent studies indicate that a solid knowledge base in STEM areas is essential to integrate into the 21st century workforce. As such, it is critical to begin science literacy, which includes creative and critical thinking, problem-solving, curiosity and self-learning, in elementary school.

### OFANIM CHOSEN

#### TO LEAD NEW MINISTRY OF EDUCATION NATIONAL STEM PROGRAM

In 2019, Ofanim was chosen by the Ministry of Education (MOE) to lead a national STEM program for informal education in periphery schools. The pilot began in six municipalities and due to its success, the MOE has asked Ofanim to expand the program to include 12 municipalities for the new school year.

In the same year, Ofanim was awarded **"Special Consultation Status"** by the United Nations Social and Economic Council (ECOSOC).



## THE NUMBERS SHOW: OFANIM WORKS

Key findings from the external evaluation conducted in 2019-2020 by the Henrietta Szold Institute show:

- 87% of the respondents reported that they enjoyed the activities a great deal
- 82% said that they would recommend the program to their friends
- 81% said that they would like to continue next year
- 75% reported that what they studied will help them in the future and that they had developed new areas of interest
- 70% said that they had learned to work independently.

A Technion study of Ofanim graduates found that 23.5% take the highest level (5 points) math matriculation compared to the periphery's average of 7.6% and of those graduates who indicated a future profession, 58% said they would like to pursue science or technology. To date, there are 30,000 Ofanim graduates throughout Israel.

## IN THE WAKE OF THE CORONA PANDEMIC

Ofanim pivoted quickly when the coronavirus pandemic hit Israel to continue to provide critical learning and services to its children. It is transitioning to hybrid learning that includes remote lessons, new training for its instructors and the development of a home STEM kit that was distributed to all program participants to keep children engaged and inspired. Instructors also offer emotional support to the children, especially those living in difficult and sometimes violent family situations.

## OUR LEADERS AND PARTNERS

Ofanim was founded by Dr. Haim Dahan, who grew up in one of Beersheva's most disadvantaged neighborhoods and was given the opportunity to learn at Ben-Gurion University's computer-science department. After founding a successful software company, he started Ofanim to give back to children with similar backgrounds.

**Ofanim's major partners include:** the Microsoft Foundation in Israel, Bezek, the Russell Berrie Foundation, the Marcus Family Foundation, BIG Shopping Mall and Applied Materials.

The organization has collaborated with the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology and Tel Hai Academic College, is in a current partnership with Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and is in the process of developing a program with the Weizmann Institute of Science.

**Friends of Ofanim is a 501 (c) (3) organization. Charitable registration number: 20-2749756.**

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### Board of Directors

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