



## UK Science & Innovation Network Country Summary

# Israel

### 1. Science and Innovation Landscape

**1<sup>st</sup>**

Israel ranks **1<sup>st</sup>** in the world for Nobel Prizes per capita in Chemistry and Economics

**2<sup>nd</sup>**

Israel is **2<sup>nd</sup>** place in success rates for European Research Council grants

**3<sup>rd</sup>**

The startup ecosystem of Israel is ranked **3<sup>rd</sup>** worldwide

As the 'Start-Up Nation', science and innovation have long been central themes of the Israeli economy. Israel, a country that makes up only 0.1% of the global population, has **more high-tech start-ups and a larger venture capital industry per capita than any other country in the world.**

Israel is recognised as world leader in research and development and has the **world's highest Research & Development (R&D) expenditure. As a percentage of GDP**, with a remarkable expenditure of 5.4 percent in 2023.

[The Global Innovation Index 2023](#) ranked Israel in the **14<sup>th</sup> place worldwide and 1<sup>st</sup> in its region.** Israel is a **world leader in nine innovation indicators** such as University–industry R&D collaboration, R&D expenditure as a percentage of GDP, venture capital deals, PCT patents, ICT services exports, and unicorn valuation.

As for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and commercialisation, it is important to note how integrated the university system is with innovation in Israel. Universities must demonstrate their impact on industry and the marketplace, in order to stay relevant. This highly successful technology transfer system is emulated all over the world.

Israel is home to three of the top 100 universities (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Weizmann Institute of Science, and the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology). With a notably high ranking at the world's top 25 in **Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering** ([Shanghai Ranking](#)).

Israel is considered a leader in **Computer Sciences, Engineering Biology, Agri-Tech, Artificial Intelligence and Cyber.**

National research policy for science and innovation is driven by [the Israel Innovation Authority](#), by [the Ministry of Innovation Science and Technology](#), and by [the Council for Higher Education](#).



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## 2. UK partnership with Israel on ST&I

In March 2023, the [2030 Roadmap for UK-Israel Bilateral Relations](#) was signed in London, outlining the strategic partnership between the two countries. This including a substantial section on Science, Innovation and Technology.

The roadmap specifies a robust £20M framework for supporting academic and R&D ties between the UK and Israel. There is commitment to deepening further the bilateral science and technology partnership through new and ambitious initiatives.

Following the strong Science, Technology & Innovation (ST&I) partnership between the UK and Israel. In September 2023, the UK Department for Science Innovation and Technology (DSIT) and Israel's Ministry of Science, Innovation and Technology signed a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#). for faster and deeper collaboration on ST&I. The deal unlocked £1.7 million worth of joint research projects, focusing on critical technologies.

The MoU sets the following research areas for collaboration, based on scientific excellence and the potential for maximum contribution and impact for both the UK and for Israel:

- Sustainability and Environmental Protection,
- Health and Medicine,
- Artificial Intelligence,
- Space.

In Israel, SIN works with the local science and innovation community in support of UK policy overseas, leading to mutual benefits to the UK and Israel. Priority areas for SIN Israel are.

- Health,
- Clean Growth and
- Emerging Technologies (AI, Engineering Biology and Quantum).

These priority areas are determined based on both countries' national priorities and strengths.

### **Key initiatives of UK - Israel Science and Innovation collaboration include:**

[UK - Israel Bilateral Collaborative R&D Call](#). Jointly led by Innovate UK and the Israel Innovation Authority, with the aim supporting UK - Israel business led collaborative, research, and development (CR&D) projects resulting in new products, industrial processes, or services.



**UK- Israel Innovation Researcher Mobility Scheme.** Managed by Universities UK International, to support UK-based researchers to travel to Israel and work jointly with Israeli partners, at top Israeli institutions. This focuses on innovation and entrepreneurship skills development. In December 2023, the second call of the scheme has been opened for mobilities. This takes place in both directions, enabling both UK based researchers to travel to Israel and Israel based researchers to travel to the UK.

**UK - Israel joint research call.** Funded by Israel's Ministry of Science, Innovation and Technology (MOST) and the UK Department of Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT); delivered by British Council UK, the bilateral call supports UK-Israel joint research. As well as mutual visits between laboratories for the purpose of facilitating the research. Topics for collaboration in 2024: Quantum, Alternative Proteins, and Artificial Intelligence in Drug Discovery.

**The UK - Israel Science Council.** An exclusive group of 23 leading scientists from the UK and Israel whose core mandate is to improve science collaboration between the two countries, which are scientific superpowers.

**UK - Israel AI in Drug Discovery Taskforce.** Consisting of group of senior representatives from leading pharmaceutical companies, start-ups, academic institutions, hospitals, Health Maintenance Organisations, and governmental agencies - from the UK and from Israel. This was established by SIN Israel recognising the UK and Israel's excellence on AI in Drug Discovery and to promote the collaboration around this topic.

**Horizon Europe:** Israel is a strong player in Horizon, and in the previous programme (Horizon 2020), Israel was among the top-five partners of the UK. In Horizon Europe, Health is the topic where the UK - Israel partnership is showing the highest success rate. SIN Israel, together with its partners, is leading high impact activities to strengthen the collaboration in this framework.

SIN Israel works closely with the [UK-Israel Tech Hub](#), which is based in the British Embassy in Israel. This promotes Tech partnerships such as the [UK – Israel HealthTech Pilot](#). And with the [British Council Israel](#) which runs the BIRAX - Britain Israel Research and Academic Exchange Partnership and the Wohl Clean Growth Alliance.

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### 3. SIN contacts

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