

The Activities of the Bengis Center for Entrepreneurship and Hi-Tech Management

2009 annual summary (1/1/09 – 12/31/09)

During 2009, the center organized many activities in order to increase awareness to the fields of Entrepreneurship and innovation among the students of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. This activity included conventions and lectures, consultation, data gathering assistance, creating cooperation with projects that promote entrepreneurship among students etc. The activities were organized in cooperation with different institutions, mostly Israel Small and Medium Enterprises Authority and The Center for Business Development in The Negev, as well as others. Here is a specification of our different activities in each and every field:

Conventions & Lectures

During 2009, the center held 32 conventions & lectures, which were attended by 2300 student, staff members and other participants:

The main Topic	Date	No. of participants
Keren-Shemesh – Loans for young entrepreneurs	2/17/2009	15
Entrepreneurs panel – <i>Entrepreneurship as a career</i>	5/12/2009	230
The business plan – part 1	5/19/2009	200
Data gathering – financial focus	5/15/2009	80
Data gathering – marketing focus	5/24/2009	80
Data gathering – financial focus	5/25/2009	25
The business plan – part 2	5/26/2009	100
Marketing planning	6/1/2009	60
Gathering business information & the use of information banks	6/4/2009	40
Patent registration	6/8/2009	40
Entrepreneurship business models and hi-tech management (in cooperation with IBM)	6/9/2009	40
Principles of writing a business plan	6/15/2009	40
Financiers' panel	6/22/2009	45
Risk management in the crisis age- constraint or opportunity?	6/30/2009	56
Branding and positioning of Small and Medium Enterprises	7/6/2009	25
Procedural demands for business foundation and tax authorities proceeding	8/18/2009	10
Data gathering from electronic information banks	10/27/2009	30
Students meeting – innovation contest brainstorming – first meeting, group no. 1	11/5/2009	6
Students meeting – innovation contest brainstorming – second meeting, group no. 1	11/8/09	6
Students meeting – innovation contest brainstorming – first meeting, group no. 2	11/8/09	9
Data gathering from electronic information banks – marketing	11/12/2009	60
• Entrepreneurship and management issues – leadership,	11/16/2009	250

ethics and marketing		
• Business management strategy – theory and practice	11/16/2009	150
• Business strategy, finance, and realization of hi-tech enterprises	11/17/2009	190
• Strategy and technological entrepreneurship	11/17/2009	240
• Young Entrepreneurs Doing Business - launching event of the young entrepreneurs project	11/19/2009	270
• Gathering business information from information banks with a marketing focus	11/19/2009	40
Young Entrepreneurs project convention – writing a business plan	24/12/09	25

- Lectures during the international entrepreneurship week 2009

Business information gathering assistance

During 2009 the center held:

- 8 workshops on information gathering. **One can read the list of conventions in the table under the Conventions & Lectures section.**
- 70 meetings of personal business information gathering from electronic information banks.

Individual Business consulting and mentoring for students and staff

During 2009 the center held:

- 88 diagnostic meetings – the meetings were aimed at understanding the idea, crystallizing it and creating an operation plan that will provide answers to the needs of the entrepreneur.
- 39 business plans examinations – during the year we have decided to fortify the support to the consulting entrepreneurs in order to maximize their chances of successes. The center gave the entrepreneurs a chance to test their business plans professionally as a part of the process of establishing their own business.
- 21 second or third consulting meetings.

Business Plan Writing Competition – from Idea to Enterprise

The Bengis Center for Entrepreneurship and Hi-Tech Management held the "Business Plan Writing Competition – from Idea to Enterprise" for BGU students (from all degrees and faculties) in 2009. The competition was directed by the Bengis Center for Entrepreneurship and Hi-Tech Management in collaboration with the Manufacturers Association of Israel, The Israel Small and Medium Enterprises Authority, MATI Be'er-Sheva – The Center for Business Development in The Negev, various business financing funds and others and has functioned as a basis for obtaining the knowledge, the experience, and the business tools required for developing an active business project.

The judging committee that escorted the project included members from the Israeli academy and business sector: Mr. Shraga Brosh, the president of the Manufacturers Association of Israel, served as chairman, and the members were Prof. Rafi Bar-El, Prof. Amos Drory, Prof. Arie Ovadia, Dr. Yitzhak Sharir, Prof. Arie Reichel and Prof. Dafna Schwartz. The committee was joined by Zion Biton, the director of MATI Be'er-Sheva, Mr. Yehuda Segev, the CEO of the Manufactures Association of Israel, Arnon Kashensky, head of the Israel Manufactures Association in the South, and both business advisors, Mr.Yosef Shavit and Mr. Rubi Shimej, who accompanied the competition.

As part of the contest, the Bengis Center provided counseling services and assistance, which included business consulting, lectures and workshops, business data collection, access to information banks etc. All of these services were given to the contestants free of charge and were done with the help of MATI Be'er-Sheva and the Israel Small and Medium Enterprises Authority.

This year, 180 groups of students, containing 220 students, participated in the contest. 98 groups, containing 126 entrepreneurs, continued to the second stage. 37 groups, containing 49 participants, continued to the final stage, in which they submitted complete business plans for judging. It is important to note that these contestants came from different departments, mostly Management, Engineering, Economics and other departments.

	No. of participants	Per cent
Management	23	47
Engineering	17	35
Economics & Others	9	18
Total	49	100

Among the main fields of activity which the business plans presented were instruction and leisure, service and also fields connected to the Hi-Tech industry (internet, computers, cellular, etc.)

	Groups	Per cent
Computers/Cellular, Internet and other Hi-tech fields (including bio-technology and environmental issues)	14	39
Teaching & Leisure (children, coffee shops, coaching, etc.)	9	24
Service and simple manufacturing (textile, decoration etc.)	7	19
Retail, tourism and import	7	18
Total	37	100

On 11/30/09 the project's judging committee was assembled and the business plans were reviewed. The participants were interviewed in order to test their understanding of the market, how their products fit market needs, their business strategy etc. The panel of judges, which included distinguished and experienced members from the academy and the business sector and from different business financial support institutions, were surprised to discover that during a short period of time – only several months – some of the entrepreneurs (students, the majority of whom are not even 30 years old) showed a deep understanding of business processes while narrowing the risks of the entrepreneurial process. This has shown that the participants have been able to obtain important tools for basing and improving their ideas, and some of them managed to found businesses in the fields of service, import etc.

The representatives of the Center keep contact with the participants and with hundreds of other students who have received business assistance since the center's establishment and support them with marketing, establishing financial connections and more.

The Global Entrepreneurship Week

The Global Entrepreneurship Week took place between Nov. 15th and Nov. 19th 2009. Universities all around the world conducted during this week special activities in the area of entrepreneurship.

Throughout the week the Bengis Center for Entrepreneurship held a series of conferences (attended by a large audience) in the fields of Strategy, Entrepreneurship, Management and Marketing. The main lectures were given by lecturers from the university (mostly from the faculty of the Guilford Glazer School of Business and Management), entrepreneurs and representatives of financiers. These conferences proved to be very popular with faculty and students and entire classes and guests from around the country came to hear them. In total, there were 6 conferences with a total of approx. 1,200 participants.

Subject	Date	No. of participants
The gathering of business information from electronic data bases with a marketing focusing	Nov. 19 th , 2009	40
“Young entrepreneurs do business” – the opening session of the young entrepreneurs project at BGU	Nov. 19 th , 2009	270
Technological strategy and entrepreneurship	Nov. 17 th , 2009	240
Business strategy, finance, and realization of Hi-Tech enterprises	Nov. 17 th , 2009	190
Strategy in business administration – theory and practice	Nov. 16 th , 2009	150
Issues in management and entrepreneurship – leadership, ethics and marketing	Nov. 16 th , 2009	250

Total No. of Participants		1140
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During the conferences about 45 students signed up for business consultation meetings and about 400 participants added themselves to the Bengis Center mailing list.

Global Innovation Tournament

Prior to the entrepreneurship week and as part of the process that preceded it on a global level – a Global Innovation Tournament was held by Stanford University among students around the world. Students from Ben Gurion University took part in this competition that was advertised by Bengis Center through the various channels and Medias throughout BGU. The subject of the competition was “How to turn saving money into something fun”. Two impressive works were submitted that were relate to Bengis Center in the global competition. One of them was selected as one of the 22 winners in the competition out of more than 1,000 participants (attached).

The following are links to information regarding the competition:

- [To the information page regarding the competition](#)
- [Links to clips showing the representation of BGU in the competition](#)
- [To information on the conferences and lectures](#)
- [To the presentations from the events](#)
- [To pictures from the event](#)
- To clips from the conferences will be uploaded - [type here](#)

New cooperative projects

The Bengis Center cooperates with different institutions on different projects that push forward business entrepreneurship among students in order to improve the services that are given to BGU students and to initiate other projects. Here is a list of projects and cooperating institutions that will join forces with the center on 2010.

1. **Choosing Tomorrow** – this project, run by the Jewish Agency, will support 25–30 students from BGU in establishing businesses in the south.
2. **Young Entrepreneurs** – supporting 40 students with entrepreneurial connotation
3. **Empowering Women Entrepreneurs** - YEP (Young Entrepreneurs Program)- a US government funded program for young women from Israel and Jordan. The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay is leading the project.

Scientific conventions – a round table summit on the problem of economic development in the Bedouin sector in the South

On 6/21/2009 The Department of Public Policy and Administration held a round table discussion on the problem of economic development in the south Bedouin sector. The meeting was held under the aegis of the Bengis center of the Guilford Glazer School of

Business and Management, Abu Basma Regional Council and NCRD - Negev Center for Regional Development. Preliminary findings from the department staff papers were discussed during the event, and members in the round table shared their experience with problems of economic development in the Bedouin sector in the South. Prof. Avishay Braverman, the Minister of Minorities, Prof. Jimmy Weinblatt and many other partners attended the meeting. The following were among the topics discussed:

- What are the obstacles for economic development in the Bedouin society of the Negev?
- What are the options for overcoming these obstacles?
- What are the steps that should be taken in economic development? (Including reference to specific projects and what measures should the different levels of government take?)

Entrepreneurship among the Bedouin population - support for a survey of entrepreneurship mapping

In recent years, as a part of the Bedouins' search for livelihood, commercial businesses have been established in some of their settlements. These businesses provide income to their owners and help create new jobs. Support organizations and institutions encourage this trend, yet no studies have been conducted in Israel in order to test what are the differences between Bedouins and Jews when they set up business and what is the effect of small businesses on the unemployment of ethnic minority groups. The study examined the differences between the resources that are in the disposal of the Bedouin entrepreneurs when they establish a business and those of the Jews.

The study's hypothesis suggested that there would be a difference between Bedouin entrepreneurs and Jewish entrepreneurs. In order to test this hypothesis a quantitative research was conducted – 281 closed questionnaires were given to 281 Bedouin business owners and 93 Jewish business owners.

The data bank that was created thanks to this survey will be useful for future studies on this subject.

A visit of the "Ness" Foundation for the Development of the Negev

On 2/3/2009 the members of the Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey in the United States that manages the Ness Foundation in Israel came to Israel. The Ness Foundation is in fact two funds whose sole purpose is the economic development of the Negev. One foundation loans money to small businesses in the Negev through the Jewish Agency and the other gives grants to projects whose purpose is to bring young population to the Negev and help it establish its life there through economic development. The purpose of the visit, beyond reviewing the projects of the funds, was to expose and increase the knowledge of the fund's board regarding the economic needs of the Negev and what can be done about them. During their visit the members of the fund visited the Guilford Glazer School of Business and Management as guests of the Bengis Center for Entrepreneurship and Hi-Tech

Management. The members of the fund were exposed to the Bengis center activities and were presented with approaches to the economic development of the Negev region based on research data. The members of the delegation included Stanley Stone, executive vice president of the Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey, Ness Fund co-chairs Eleanor Rubin and Norman Weinberg, and members of the fund's management Gerald and Marilyn Flanzbaum, Leonard and Frieda Posnock, Phyllis Bernstein and Gordon Haas.

Activities planned for 2010

1. Establishing a Bengis Alumni entrepreneurs club.
2. Establishing two support plans combined with a competition, based on the success of the business plan writing contest which was held during 2009.
3. Taking part in the activities of the YEP program US government funded program for young women from Israel and Jordan, which is lead by The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Its partners in Israel are The Bengis Center for Entrepreneurship and Hi-Tech Management of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the Chamber of Commerce Israel-United States and the BIRD foundation the Israel-U.S. Binational Industrial Research and Development. Five women from each state will be chosen to participate in the program. The program includes a full scholarship for a month long stay in the US.

2009 Activity Summary

Section	Sub-section	
Lectures	No. of participants	2291
	Average participants number per event	81
	No. of events	32
Business data gathering	Consulting meetings for data gathering	70
	Lectures on data gathering	8
Business consulting	Diagnostic meetings (first)	88
	Consolatory meetings (second/third)	21
	Business plan testing	39
Established Businesses during the year		
Cooperative projects		2