

*MATANEL FOUNDATION*

*ACTIVITY REPORT*

**Program:** "Ofaqim LeMada"

**Year:** 2021

**Name of the Program:** "Ofaqim LeMada"- Pre-Military Science Program.  
Young Leadership Association in Science R.A.

**Year of activity:** 2021- Second year of the program- Second half.

2021- Third year of the program- First half

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**Website / Facebook address of the organization:**

The program has a page on the Davidson Institute website, which includes information about the program and the registration process, as well as a promotional movie describing the program.

[https://davidson.weizmann.ac.il/programs/mechina\\_kdam](https://davidson.weizmann.ac.il/programs/mechina_kdam)

In addition, our program has a page on the "Mechinot" organization website, which is a home to all pre-military programs in Israel and supports all of the programs professionally and organizationally.

<https://mechinot.org.il/mechina/list/general/ofakim-1730>

**Number of active participants in the program:**

28 trainees graduated in the second year of the program.

38 trainees are currently participating in the third year of the program.

**Estimated number of impacted participants:**

As of September 2021, the third year of the program, the trainees met approximately **750** students in schools in the periphery every week. The trainees introduced students to the world of science, through experiments, experiential learning and “special science days”.

**Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):**

We are currently concluding the first half of the third year of the program, with 38 trainees.

This year we expanded the scientific volunteering in the periphery. The scientific volunteering takes place in 8 schools in the city of Ofaqim and in 5 schools in another district, close to Ofaqim. Since the beginning of the year, the trainees have also conducted 15 special science days in these schools.

In addition, the trainees run weekly extra curriculum activities in the science center in Ofaqim.

Also, we are currently completing the process of sorting and recruiting the trainees for the 2022 program, the fourth year of the program.

**The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):**

Due to coronavirus pandemic, the volunteer program faced quite a few challenges this past year. The social distancing guidelines passed by Israel’s Ministry of Health, restricted the way in which the programs' trainees interacted with the Ofaqim students.

Consequently, we were forced to adapt the program to a hybrid format, combining online meetings with small in-person meetings.

We are proud to say that despite all the limitations, we were able to reach approximately **200** Ofaqim students each week.

Additionally, our training staff worked continuously during the health crisis and expanded the program's scope of activities to include youth-at-risk, which also contributed to the increase in the number of Ofaqim students participating in the program's science activities.

Fortunately, during the months of April-June 2021, the health restrictions were reduced, and we were able to return to full activity. During these months, we added as many volunteer science activities as possible.

We held special "science days" for elementary schools, where approximately **120** students from various Ofaqim elementary schools visited Ofaqim's science center for 4 hours of fun filled science activities. We also held weekly learning center sessions for 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade students; approximately **40** students would come to the learning center for 4 hours of science and math lessons.

We also initiated a large community event which was attended by over 100 participants, during which the trainees delivered various scientific lectures based on their studies throughout the year.

To illustrate the impact of the trainees within the community in Ofaqim, the program was contacted to participate in a unique community project with senior citizens in the city. After receiving some training, the trainees interviewed senior citizens in the community, who told them their life story. The stories were edited into a book.

At the end of June 2021, we held a graduation ceremony in the city of Ofaqim for the 28 trainees.. The ceremony was attended by partners from the community of Ofaqim, the Davidson Institute for Science Education, the Weizmann Institute of Science, and the families of the trainees.

**The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future...):**

The Davidson Institute's evaluation unit conducted a comprehensive evaluation report for the first and the second year of the program. (The latest original evaluation report is attached to the email)

The evaluation methodology included:

- Questionnaires for trainees and their parents
- Interviews with the staff and leaders of the programs, trainees, partners at the Davidson Institute, and school principals in the city of Ofaqim.
- Observations of activities and meetings
- Documents' analysis

Main recommendations:

- Dedicate more time in the schedule to process challenges and issues that arise in the scientific volunteering in schools
- Expand the training team to ensure personal attention to each trainee.
- Enable the trainees to further initiate, plan and conduct activities and learning, within the framework of the program.
- Increase collaborations with youth organizations in Ofaqim.
- Continue to develop the organization of alumni of the program

**Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:**

- For the purpose of expanding the program, 48 trainees are expected to participate in the fourth year of the program, which will open in September 2022.
- We are currently examining the possibility of opening an additional branch of the program in another district close to the city of Ofaqim, in order to expand the scientific volunteering in the southern periphery of Israel.

- We plan to maintain and expand the scientific volunteering in more schools in the coming year.

**Please join a 5 minutes movie which presents your institution and the particular project supported by the Matanel Foundation. The movie should be accessible to the philanthropic world and to other potential donors.**

Please find below a link to a short movie demonstrating the trainees' volunteer work and their experience in the second year of the program.

<https://youtu.be/nLorBpPSLGE>