

## BZU Strategy 2017-2022

### Entrepreneurial Role & Being





## Foreward

The entrepreneurial formation of Birzeit University started in 1924 with its launch as primary school for girls. This first building block rolled out a legacy of knowledge and learning and ensued a process of documented planning and assessment that led to our strategy today. This document presents our mission and vision for the future and the underlying themes and priorities that guide our interventions to achieve the strategic objectives for the coming five years.

Not to be defined by problem solving, our strategic framework is grounded and articulated with a clear vision for the future in which even shorter-term strategies are aligned and resources are prioritized towards the enhancement and fulfillment of our mission in the longer term.

To this end, we embraced a process of self-awareness and critical enquiry of our local context and its epistemic manifestations. Through dialogue and exchange with the university constituency and the wider

community, the strategy was structured to include within it the mechanisms to drive change and the capacity to create impact.

The strategy stems from a vision that recognizes our locale in a globalized context and the agency to preserve our Palestinian identity within a culture of Arab Islamic heritage. For Birzeit University identifies itself with nations under colonial rule, rejects its isolation from the rest of the world, and proactively challenges local critical issues that are invariably aligned with global themes of poverty, the environment, climate change, inequality, access to quality health and education, migration etc. Such explorations prioritize knowledge generation and synthesis across disciplines and bring forth new possibilities of transformative change for the university and our society.

Foremost in our priorities is strengthening collaboration between the university and the wider segments of society and consolidating existing networks through



institutional channels that enable innovation and creativity in knowledge sourcing and application and formal and informal learning and practice. Through interdisciplinary cooperation and exchange across the university constituency and beyond, we seek to motivate knowledge production and transfer research outputs from the individual to the collective, affirming their relevance and public value. Through this strategic transformation, the university continues to fulfill its entrepreneurial role and being.

This document was compiled with wide participation and consultations with the university constituency of students, staff, management and board of trustees. The participatory approach is evidenced by not only the number of contributors but also the fruitful collaboration between the university and the community in the reproduction of its vision. For the makers of the strategy are essentially part of its change recipients.

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Assessing the impact of Birzeit University on its context is never complete without acknowledging the spirit that steered its actions, intangible as it may be but not less significant. The university and its community have been unyielding in the support of national awareness and active citizenship, encouraging dialogue on controversial issues in an atmosphere of intellectual freedom and mutual tolerance.”

**Birzeit University: The Story  
of a National Institution (2010)**





## Our vision

An Entrepreneurial institution with all its constituents actively engaged in knowledge production both nationally and globally.

## Our Mission

Providing an independent enlightened environment that celebrates freedom of thought and expression, embraces democratic practices and dialogue, provokes excellence, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in teaching, learning and research and contributes to society progress and advancement through transformative knowledge and capacity development.



## Our Values

Birzeit University, through its law, associated regulations, processes and procedures, abides by the following principles and values that inform and guide its constituency towards the effective fulfillment of its mission and vision.

- Excellence
- Equity and equality
- Freedom of expression
- Integrity and professionalism
- Diversity
- Sustainable development
- Lifelong learning

## Our Strategic Objectives

- **Strategic Objective 1:** Competent graduates capable of work and production, committed to the realization of the Palestinian developmental goals.
- **Strategic Objective 2:** Active contribution to knowledge production and development nationally and internationally through research leading to innovative knowledge and products.
- **Strategic Objective 3:** Community engagement embedded within the university culture and practices with active contribution to sustainable development.
- **Strategic Objective 4:** Effective and efficient governance and management guided by results and proactive in achieving sustainability and continuity.

converge?

$$a_n = \frac{1}{n!}$$

$$= 2 \frac{2^3}{3}$$

$$= \frac{4}{2} \\ 3 \times 2$$

$$= \frac{2^4}{3!}$$

# Our Priorities

**Birzeit University priorities stem from the strategic framework defining its vision, mission and values and are the guiding principles of its objectives, activities and outcomes.**

- 1** Overcoming impediments to progress by maintaining financial independence, epistemic freedom and self-governance with the active support of our constituencies in realizing and preserving our autonomy and their active engagement in discussions of critical issues and the decision-making processes.
- 2** Strengthening entrepreneurialism as an integral part of university culture to guide our progress towards new possibilities and opportunities by reshaping present realities to meet future challenges.
- 3** Expanding student participation and engagement as essential drivers of innovation and epistemic and entrepreneurial creativity through effective mechanisms that support students' ideas, research projects, and initiatives.
- 4** Encouraging exposure to worldwide experiences and practices to create open, inclusive decentralized knowledge platforms that can contribute to the internationalization of the university.
- 5** Pursuing interaction and collaboration in developing skill sets and frameworks with the active participation of academic researchers and professional practitioners to shift the center of knowledge production and impact to the society and enable our entrepreneurial endeavors in knowledge creation, synthesis, transfer and exchange.

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Beyond the barriers of space with its lingual and cultural geography and economic and political contexts, knowledge is universally human. For language is neither syntax nor culture, but the tool that shapes knowledge, and the knowledge that shapes the language.”

**Palestine and Arabic  
Studies Program (PAS)**





# Challenges

**As a higher education institution, Birzeit University faces a myriad of challenges that are both generic and specific. The generic challenges are shared with twenty first century higher education worldwide while the specific challenges are directly related to our geopolitical context and its social and epistemic associations. These challenges inform and guide our strategy within its context of time and space.**

- 1** The Israeli occupation imposes direct threats to higher education in Palestine by restricting mobility of persons and goods as well as limiting knowledge exchange with devastating consequences. Consequently, the geographic diversity of our student body and staff is dwindling, as the university is unable to recruit students and professionals from across Palestine and abroad due to these restrictions. Similarly, most endeavors for development are constantly being obstructed and delayed. Such confinement and restriction undermine the very roots of knowledge development and production, and diminish innovation and productivity as part of the colonial policies aimed at incapacitating our institutions and limiting their role, scope and outreach.
- 2** The current social and economic contexts present multi-layered challenges evidenced by the lack of social justice, gender inequality and limited access to quality education and employment opportunities for significant segments of the society.
- 3** The shifting needs of society and transformations in the labor market require higher education institutions to review and revise their curricula in terms of content and delivery to ensure their graduates are equipped with relevant competencies and expert knowledge. In parallel, there are growing demands to measure the contribution and impact of higher education and its institutions on the knowledge economy and assert their public value.
- 4** The rise in demand for higher education in Palestine due to population growth and youth bulge, and the increase in the number of higher education institutions present further planning challenges. Birzeit University has responded by increasing its student admission while ensuring continuous quality enhancement of its educational provisions and outcomes. At the same time, the university anticipates future growth and demand and continues to develop contemporary academic programs that empower its graduates to shape dynamic futures for themselves within and beyond traditional contexts.





- 5 Funding for higher education in Palestine remains the lifeline for its survival and continuity especially that many of the global alternatives are not available within the Palestinian context. The situation is further escalated by diminishing government funding, limited contribution from philanthropic institutions and individuals and the economic and political crises ravaging the world and the region. Consequently, Birzeit University needs the agility to address such complexities by expanding its fundraising effort and diversifying funding streams to ensure the continuity of its entrepreneurial role in the Palestinian society.
- 6 Information technology development presents further challenges as Birzeit University continues to invest in financial and human resources to stay abreast of advanced technologies. At the same time, the university is constantly adapting to technology impact on pedagogical approaches, learning methodologies and assimilating to changes in outputs, contexts and mediums through which learning processes are exercised.
- 7 The globalization of higher education and its premise of benchmarking outputs irrespective of their geographical and spatial contexts, and the ranking of higher education institutions performance against unified criteria are additional challenges facing higher education institutions. Birzeit University is committed to preserving its cultural identity and consolidating its national role and quality performance, while advancing its achievement in such standardized processes.
- 8 Current changes in higher education landscape in Palestine, governance structures and regulatory frameworks may present new challenges for existing higher education institutions in preserving their independence and autonomy, sustaining their capacity for development and growth and enabling their direct linkages and engagement with the community.

## Strategic Objective **1**

# **Competent graduates capable of work and production, committed to the realization of the Palestinian developmental goals.**

Developing an inclusive knowledge environment that stimulates creativity and entrepreneurship, through student-centered learning and diverse teaching and learning methods, and aligns academic curricula and co-curricular activities with the university's values and principles through periodic assessment of their outcomes to validate their currency and relevance to the dynamic needs of society and their impact on students and graduates competitiveness locally and internationally.

### **The expected results of success:**

1. Birzeit University has distinguished positioning in local and international higher education contexts.
2. Academic programs meet the needs of society and comply with modern international standards.
3. Community engagement is integral to educational processes asserting reciprocity and complementarity of the university's academic and community roles.
4. Academic faculty and administrative staff attain advanced competencies and skills with distinct career paths and mechanisms for professional development.
5. Advanced methodologies of teaching and learning and effective assessment and evaluation methods provide students with equal and appropriate opportunities to enhance their progress and achievement.
6. Communication and interaction channels with students are effective in supporting and informing the educational process.
7. Diverse campus life enriches students' experiential learning and broadens their sense of citizenship and social responsibility.



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Creating a domain for emancipatory knowledge production guided by the prowess and expertise of Birzeit University as a Palestinian institution of learning within a colonial setting, and informed by global academic experiences, especially from the South, beyond Eurocentric and orientalist perspectives to explore different contexts, analytical approaches and theoretical frameworks in the interpretation of social phenomena.

**Doctorate Program in Social Sciences**



## Strategic Objective **2**

### **Active contribution to knowledge production and development nationally and internationally through research leading to innovative knowledge and products.**

Endorsing free and participatory thought that asserts reciprocity and interaction within the epistemic and the humanist domains, shifting research focus from a community of autonomous scholars towards a community of practice where practitioners and academics share and contribute equally to the entrepreneurial endeavors of the university; for entrepreneurialism works across disciplines in knowledge production and practice, and judges academic feat by relevance and impact within the domestic and the international spheres.

#### **The expected results of success:**

1. Research capacities and capabilities are enhanced in the areas of basic and applied research.
2. Research outputs advance new knowledge and applications with direct relevance to society.
3. Research projects are implemented through local and international cooperation.
4. Academic publications are significant in volume and impact and disseminated through refereed journals and scientific forums.
5. Research outputs and results are in coherence with the epistemic, social and economic contexts.
6. Active business/social incubator supports innovation and enterprise in the university.



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The high number of citations of scientific articles is one of the distinguishing factors which qualified Birzeit University to lead locally, achieve good standing among universities in the Arab region, and contribute to its ranking within the top 3% in the world university ranking.”

**The Faculty of Graduate Studies**



## Strategic Objective **3**

# **Community engagement embedded within the university culture and practices with active contribution to sustainable development**

Advancing community engagement within an epistemic national context, linking university outputs in all forms with the needs of the society across segments and sectors, through proactive involvement that advances complementarity and impact on critical issues and supports intellectual exchange, openness, diversity and differentiation in partnership with local and international organizations.

### The expected results of success:

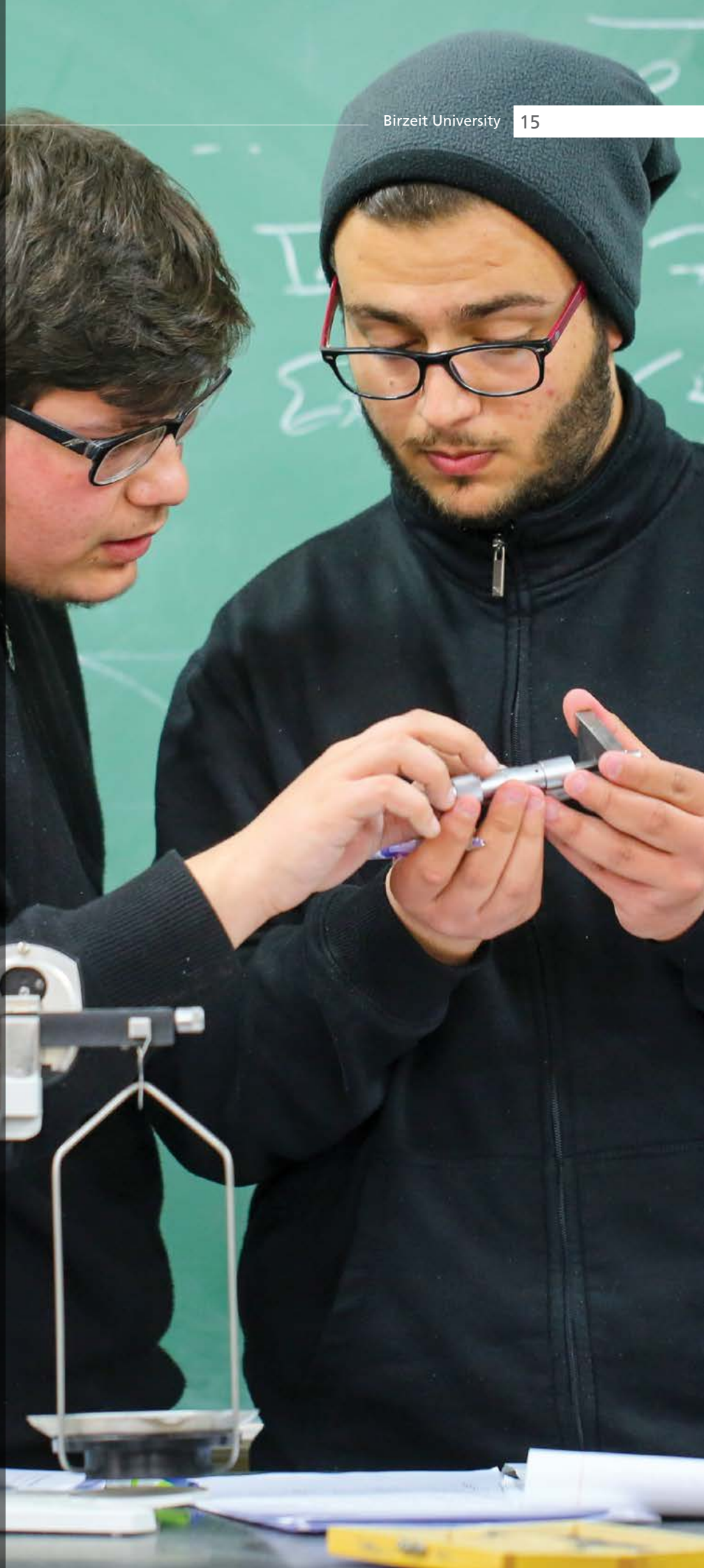
1. Birzeit University contributes to creative solutions through the development of policies and processes of planning, monitoring and evaluation.
2. Specialist vocational programs and professional training and certification advance individuals' and institutional capacities.
3. Enabled entrepreneurial ecosystem supports business and social initiatives, innovation and enterprise within the university and the community.
4. Community programs and activities are geared towards social, economic, political and cultural needs of the society and implemented through local and international collaborations.
5. Institutional policies and procedures integrate community engagement within the university fabric, involving wide spectra of the Palestinian society, both individuals and organizations, across public, private and civil sectors.



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Art at Birzeit University enjoys a wealth of forms and colors; its interdisciplinary academic programs surpass defined disciplines towards interactive and participatory art practice, using free expressive thought to explore social and political issues, exercise cultural awareness in mediums of its own and enhance engagement in formation and synthesis for greater impact on the university community and the local and global art scenes.”

**Birzeit University Museum**



## Strategic Objective **4**

### **Effective and efficient governance and management guided by results and proactive in achieving sustainability and continuity**

Developing and institutionalizing good governance and effective management to maximize return of human and financial resources and assets, by consolidating an environment conducive to excellence and creativity through comprehensive transformation of the managerial roles, executive functions and monitoring and evaluation processes to enhance institutional performance and productivity, with the support of information technology.

#### **The expected results of success:**

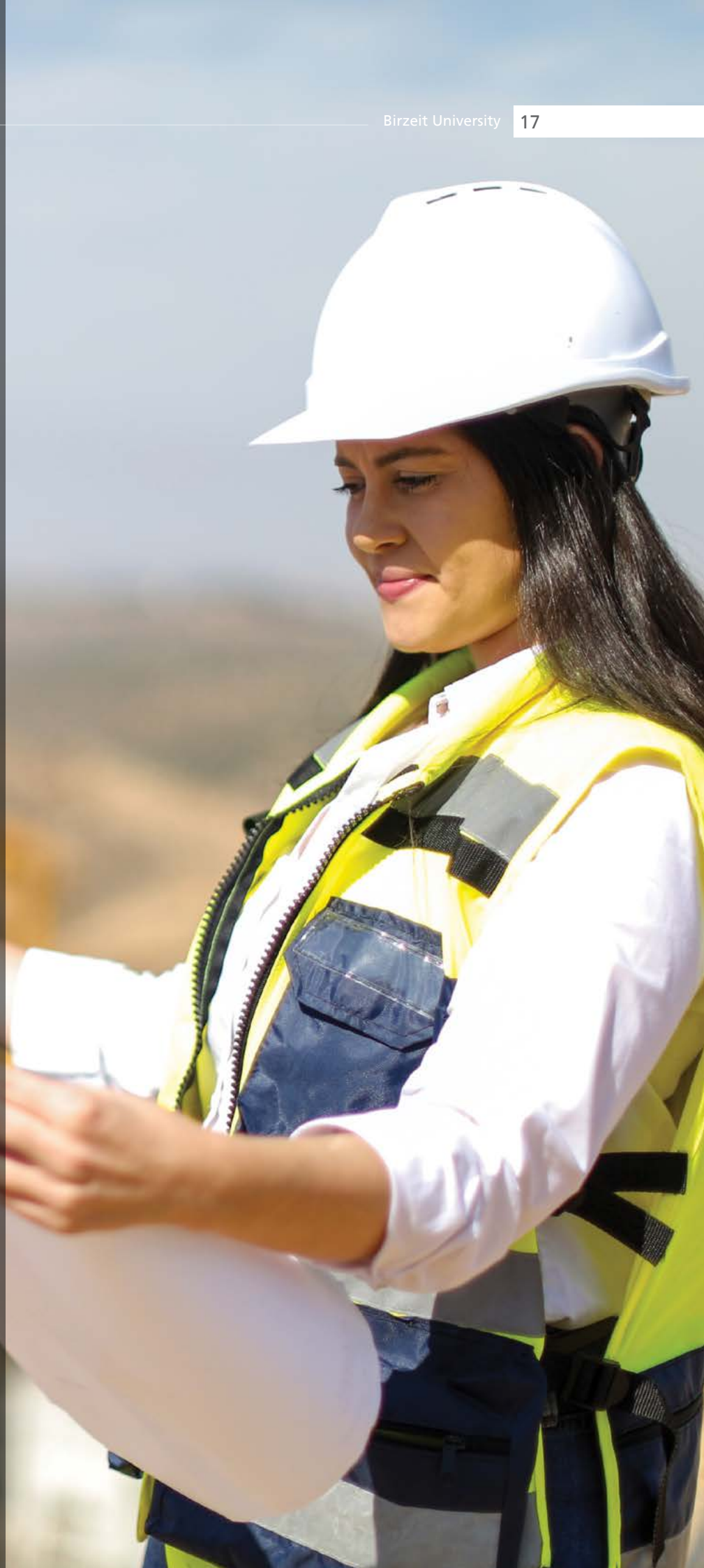
1. Coherent organizational structure meets the needs of academic and administrative units while observing complementarity of roles and delineating lines of responsibilities and authorities.
2. Regulations, procedures and infrastructure support the work environment through results-based management strategies that enforce transparency and accountability.
3. Revenues streams are diversified and operational expenditures are rationalized.
4. Assets and resources are efficiently managed and investment projects are subject to rigorous risk assessment and mitigation.
5. Work environment is positive, attractive and characterized by cooperation, dialogue and mutual respect.
6. Diverse portfolio of partners, donors, grants and scholarship schemes.
7. Campus facilities and environs are maintained to highest standards with embedded green practices, and meet the needs of the university community, visitors and the public.
8. Prominent media presence through networks of communication channels that advocate the university's mission, direction and achievements.



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Supporting primary health care as a strategy to improve health conditions under occupation and provide health services with focus on research, planning and health education for development, within a framework of cooperation with all sectors working on health in its broadest definition as a phenomenon of time and space and an integral part of the social, economic, political and cultural structures.”

**Institute of Public and  
Community Health**



# Performance Indicators

## Strategic Goal 1

- Graduates employability
- Enrolled students and graduates satisfaction
- Graduation rate
- Employers satisfaction
- Career development of academic faculty and staff
- Students to academic faculty ratio
- Attrition rate
- University ranking and awards

## Strategic Goal 2

- Annual volume of scientific publications and their classification
- Citation index and impact factors of scientific research
- Annual budget for scientific research
- Income of research activities
- Volume and scope of cooperation agreements and their geographic diversity

## Strategic Goal 3

- Number of professional diplomas and certificates offered
- New businesses and startups launched
- Partnerships and cooperation agreements with local and international institutions
- Community partners satisfaction

## Strategic Goal 4

- Deficit/surplus in the university annual budget
- Ratio of support staff to academic faculty
- Information technology usage and scope
- Revenue streams and their distributions
- Campus facilities utilization rate
- Staff and academic faculty satisfaction
- Financial aid for students
- Fundraising and advancement
- Developmental projects annual budget
- Green practices
- Libraries resources
- Media presence and performance
- Annual revenues from investments
- Institutional effectiveness audit





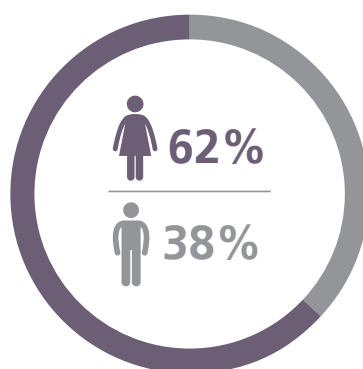


# Facts & Figures

Academic year 2017/2018



Enrolled students  
**13,963**

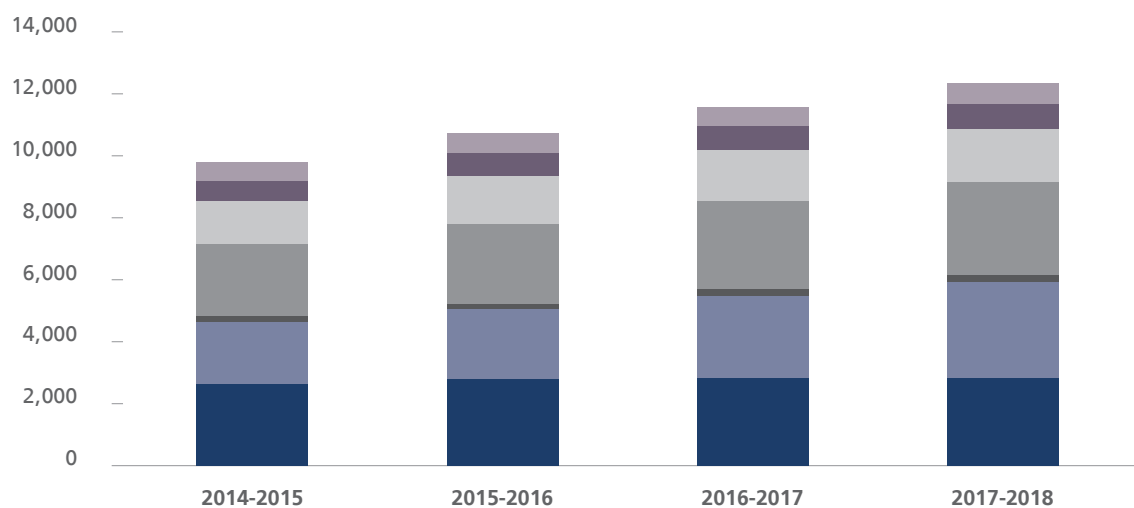
**12,297**

Undergraduate students

**1,518**

Graduate students

Distribution of Undergraduate Students by faculty



- Science
- Pharmacy, Nursing and Health Professions
- Law and Public Administration
- Engineering and Technology
- Education
- Business and Economics
- Arts

About



**36,000** Graduates

from the academic year 1975/1976  
until the academic year 2016/2017





# 108

Academic programs

72

Bachelor programs

+

32

Master programs

+

1

PhD program

+

2

Diploma programs

+

1

International students program



## Student Financial Aid

Academic year 2016/2017

# 4.2

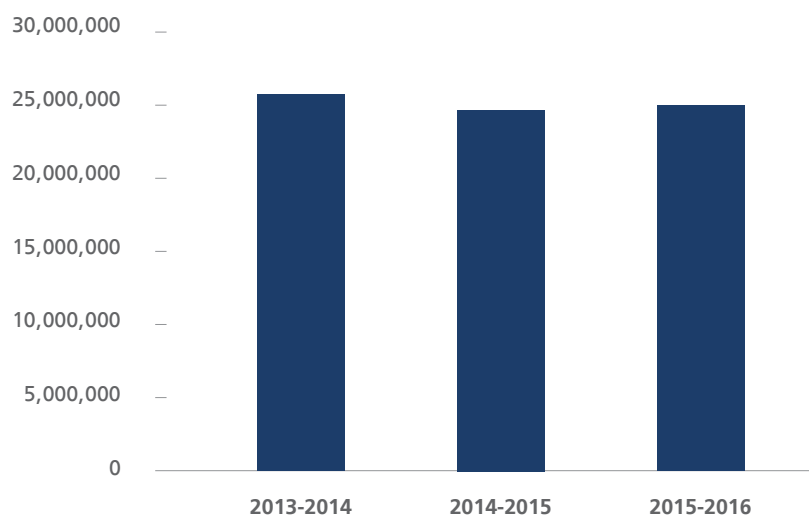
Million Jordanian Dinars  
(around USD 5.9 Million)

# 40%

of the total number of students were beneficiaries of scholarships, fee waivers, loans, and financial aid



## Operating Expenses (JOD)





## Faculty and Staff

**592** Full-time and part-time faculty members

32%

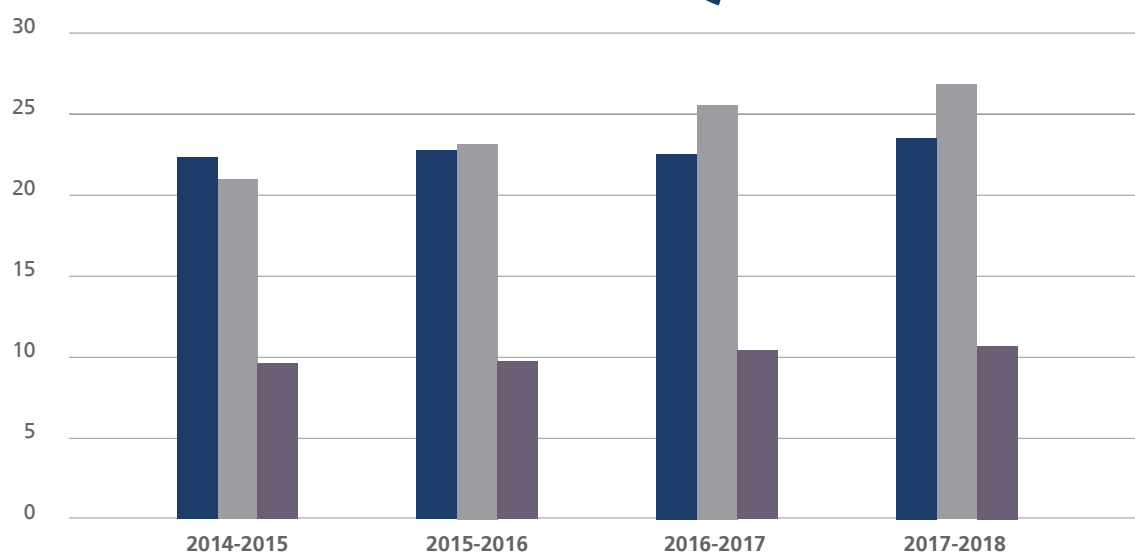


54%



**519** Full-time and part-time administrative staff

45%



- Students to faculty members ratio
- Students to administrative staff ratio
- Students to faculty and staff ratio



## Campus

Campus Size

**800** donums

70%



Green gardens and open areas

**28**

Main buildings

**8** Faculties

**7** Institutes

**4** Centers

**4** Libraries

**1** Clinic

**6** Cafeterias

**1** Museum

**1** Auditorium

**1** Observatory

**1** Gymnasium





**1** Stadium

**4** Sports fields





## International Rankings

2018		Top <b>3%</b> of the universities in the world	Rank # 801 among 30,000 universities in the world
2018		Rank <b>38</b>	Among 1,000 Arab universities
2017		Rank <b>30</b> Rank <b>2160</b>	Among Arab universities In the world
2017		Rank <b>306</b>	In the world



## Art and Ethnographic Collection

**250** items | Artworks

**340** items | Palestinian traditional costumes and accessories

**1380** items | Ethnographic collection



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