

COVID-19 EMERGENCY FUND TO SUPPORT TECHNION STUDENTS

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the Technion to take unprecedented steps to maintain its educational imperative while ensuring the health and safety of its students, faculty and staff. The government of Israel has declared a state of emergency, which means that nearly all Technion employees are required to stay at home and not come to campus for the coming month, and students who are able to do so have been asked to move off campus to ease the crowding in dormitories, in a hope to prevent the spread of the disease. Regular in-person classes cannot be presented, and the campus will essentially be closed.

The Technion has therefore moved into high gear to provide most of its courses online and prevent disruption for its students, particularly those in their final year of studies. Canceling the semester would force them to take an extra semester, or even year, to finish their degrees, delaying their entrance to the workforce and financial stability. In turn, this would cause additional damage to the Israeli economy, a concern that is already in mind given the current situation.

Implementing remote teaching technologies on such a large scale requires immediate investment, the actual amount of which is yet unknown. Nonetheless, such investment is considered vital.

While providing students the courses and educational tools and materials they need is a priority, the very **first priority** is student welfare. It is clear that for many students, the COVID-19 pandemic is creating personal crises that must be addressed urgently.

For the citizens of Israel, as well as throughout the world, normal life has been completely disrupted, with most workplaces closed or operating with minimal staff, daycare and schools closed, and the population requested to stay home as much as possible. Many Technion students come from families that are unable to help them financially even in normal circumstances. The sudden shutdown of the economy has greatly exacerbated their financial difficulties.

Students used to supporting themselves have suddenly found that their income has totally disappeared as their workplaces have been forced to shut down. For example, most of the Technion laboratories are being temporarily closed, and places of entertainment have been closed by government order, which is financially disastrous for students supporting themselves as waiters,

bartenders, etc. Students accustomed to supporting themselves with odd jobs and part-time work need to continue paying rent and buying food, but there is just no money for this or to cover unexpected emergency expenses. Under these difficult conditions, help is needed to provide emotional and financial support to students whose lives have been turned upside down.

Additional psychological support and referral must be made available to students who are having trouble coping with the anxiety and stress caused at this particular time. Our counseling services already offer an attentive ear and assistance for a variety of concerns, including depression, crisis management, transitional issues, grief, and eating, sexual, or relationship matters triggered by interpersonal, familial, academic or any other source. This resource will be even more important at this time for all our students, especially for new immigrants who have come to Israel alone and lack a supportive social network or for students whose family members have become ill with the corona virus.

To help students carry on with their studies and maintain as much normalcy as possible until the corona virus crisis passes, the Technion proposes the establishment of the **COVID-19 Emergency Fund to Support Technion Students**, which will make it possible to provide the necessary academic, emotional and financial support students need to weather the corona virus crisis while managing their academic load.

With your generous help, Technion students will be able to continue their studies during this challenging and uncertain time.

Funding

Gifts at varying giving levels are welcome.

The following activities will be supported by the **COVID-19 Emergency Fund to Support Technion Students**:

1. Psychological support
2. Emergency funds for students with special financial problems
3. Distance learning
4. Unexpected operational expenses that the Technion is incurring at this time.