Highlights



Innovation & Makers Hub

Building skills. Inspiring futures.

The need

As artificial intelligence reshapes education and employment, young people need the skills to think, create and solve complex problems.

Our answer

A cutting-edge Innovation & Makers Hub, serves as a multidisciplinary platform offering integrated pedagogical, technical, and emotional support

Time frame

A three-year programme, launching in September 2026.

Target population

300 students and 50 staff in Year One, expanding across the entire Leo Baeck community.

Impact

Empowering the next generation with the skills to innovate, collaborate and lead.

The Leo Baeck Innovation & Makers Hub

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Leo Baeck Education Center – Executive Summary and Vision

Founded in 1938, the Leo Baeck Education Center is one of Israel's leading educational institutions and the country's largest center for Progressive Judaism. Serving approximately 2,400 students each year, from early childhood through 12th grade, including gifted learners and students on the autism spectrum, our campus is home to a vibrant community of Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Druze, and Bahá'í students.

Guided by the values of Progressive Judaism and a deep commitment to human dignity, inclusion, and social responsibility, we empower young people to embrace Tikkun Olam (repairing the world), while building a more just, inclusive, and shared society in Israel.

Addressing Today's Educational Challenges

In an age shaped by instant access to information and powerful artificial intelligence, opportunities for independent thinking, hands-on problem-solving, and practical creativity are diminishing. As a result, many young people are less equipped to develop original solutions to complex real-world challenges.

To transform this challenge into a powerful opportunity, we are establishing ***The Innovation & Makers Hub***. Housed directly within the laboratory complex established through your generous support, this new initiative builds upon the very foundation you helped create.

The Vision & Pedagogical Impact

The Innovation & Makers Hub will be a dynamic, multidisciplinary learning environment that integrates educational, technical, and social-emotional support. Grounded in a hands-on, project-based approach, the Hub will empower students to move beyond being passive consumers of technology and become confident creators, innovators, and problem-solvers.

Core Goals:

- **Cultivating Independent Thinkers:** Empowering students to approach real-world challenges with curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, and innovative problem-solving.
- **Developing Technological Skills:** Building confidence and proficiency in modern technologies through hands-on learning in a safe, collaborative, and supportive environment.
- **Advancing Inclusive Education:** Strengthening learning across all academic disciplines while providing adaptive, experiential pathways that also enable students with special needs to fully participate, succeed, and thrive.

Three Central Pillars

Innovation & Creativity: Empowering students to transform original ideas into reality, guiding them from concept and iterative design to the creation of tangible, real-world solutions.

Robotics Foundation: Equipping students with industry-relevant skills in robotics, mechanics, electronics, engineering, and computer programming, preparing them for the technologies of tomorrow.

Essential Soft Skills: Cultivating collaboration, communication, resilience, adaptability, and teamwork – the critical interpersonal skills needed to solve complex challenges in an ever-changing world.

Physical Layout & Safety Infrastructure

Located in the campus laboratory complex established thanks to your initial support, the Hub provides direct access to outdoor learning and fabrication areas. Designed to support both safety and flexible instruction, the facility will feature three independently secured, purpose-built learning zones with controlled access:

The Learning Studio ("Clean Room"): A flexible classroom designed for instruction, coding, robotics assembly, digital design, and other clean fabrication activities, including 3D printing.

The Fabrication Workshop ("Maker Space"): The heart of the Hub, equipped with manual and power tools for cutting, drilling, sanding, assembly, and prototyping, enabling students to design, build, test, and refine projects.

The Materials & Project Storage Room: A secure storage area for raw materials, specialized equipment, and student projects, ensuring work can be preserved across multiple stages of design.

Implementation Timeline & Operational Leadership

Phase A **Facility Development**	In Progress Through August 2026	Space planning, facility renovations, and procurement of advanced equipment.
Phase B **Faculty Training**	In Progress Through August 2026	Comprehensive technical, educational, and safety training for faculty and leadership.
Phase C **Program Launch**	Scheduled Sep-Dec 2026	Official launch with an initial cohort of students for program refinement and evaluation.
Phase D **Full Integration**	Scheduled Jan. 2027	Full integration into the secondary school curriculum and daily educational programming.

Operations & Management

To ensure long-term sustainability, daily operations will be led by a dedicated Hub Manager starting at 50% FTE during Years 1 and 2, expanding to 100% FTE in Year 3 alongside a full-time Lab Technician as participation grows.

Beyond the school day, the Hub will become a vibrant regional resource, hosting robotics and innovation programs, hackathons, design challenges, community workshops, and educational initiatives for the broader Haifa community, while also welcoming visiting educators, students, and international delegations.

Hub Manager – Aviv Harari

A former developer of advanced systems at Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, with extensive experience in establishing makerspaces across Israel, Aviv transitioned into education and has taught computer science at Leo Baeck for several years. He brings both technical mastery and pedagogical expertise to the role.

Student Leadership:

Trained faculty and student **Hub Stewards** will assist with peer mentorship, fostering a campus-wide culture of safety and shared responsibility.

Strategic Partnership

- **Technion – Israel Institute of Technology:** Through our collaboration with the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, led by Prof. Alon Wolf and Prof. Moran Bercovici (a distinguished Leo Baeck alumnus), the Hub benefits from elite academic oversight, equipment selection guidance, and pathways to university-level engineering research.

- **Elbit Systems:** We are developing an operational partnership with Elbit Systems, incorporating industry expertise and employee volunteers to mentor students and support ongoing programs.

Expected Outcomes & Success Metrics

Key Metrics (Years 1-3):

- Year 1: Direct engagement of **300 high school students** and 20 faculty members across multiple disciplines.
- Year 2: **15% expansion** in student participation.
- Year 3: An **additional 20% growth** in student engagement.
- **Competitive Robotics:** Launching Leo Baeck's first official competitive team in the **FIRST Robotics** program.
- **Community Outreach:** Establishing after-school innovation programs, hackathons, design challenges, and workshops for the broader Haifa community and visiting international delegations.

Join Us in Shaping the Future

The Innovation & Makers Hub will fundamentally redefine the educational landscape at Leo Baeck, positioning our school at the forefront of future-oriented technological learning. It will serve as an undeniable magnet for outstanding students and exceptional educators alike, establishing a proactive, creative ecosystem that responds directly to an evolving world.
We invite you to partner with us in pioneering this visionary asset. Together, we are building skills and inspiring the future.

With respect and appreciation,

Rabbi Ofek Meir
Headmaster and Managing Director
Leo Baeck Education Center