

Honorary Fellows

The OUI grants honorary fellowships to noteworthy individuals, often in fields that dovetail with the OUI's mission. Among the recipients are public figures whose achievements have benefited humanity, the Jewish people, or the State of Israel, and those who significantly contributed to the development of the OUI.

In 2021, the OUI conferred honorary fellowships on five outstanding individuals.



Photo: Oded Karni

From left: Guy Miron, Eli Amir, Imad Telhami, Mimi Ajenstadt, Chava Alberstein, Yuval Wagner, Dorit Beinisch, Zeev Abeles

Chava Alberstein, In recognition of her immense contribution to the enrichment of cultural life in Israel for over five decades; for the sweetness of her voice that soars from stages in Israel and around the world and touches the hearts of tens of thousands of listeners; for her sensitive lyrics and compositions that have so naturally become treasures in the soundtrack of Hebrew music; for her prolific work, immortalized in some sixty albums that appeal to a variety of audiences, from the very young to the elderly; for her mission to revive and preserve the heritage of Jewish-Yiddish culture; for her commitment to commemorate the generation of Yiddish artists; and for her intergenerational collaboration with young artists, which has produced innovative and original work.

Eli Amir, In recognition of his contribution to the enrichment of Hebrew literature; for his original writing, which recounts the historical narrative of the veteran Jewish community in Iraq; for being a voice for more than one hundred thousand Iraqi immigrants torn from their homes in the Diaspora, who faced many hardships of absorption in Israel in their quest to fulfill their Zionist dream; for raising issues of vital importance to public discourse, including equality, social justice, prejudice, and cultural diversity; and for being an ambassador of words for his rich culture and heritage to the Hebrew-reading public, and in translation, to readers of numerous other languages, including Arabic.

Imad Telhami, In recognition of his tireless contribution to Israeli industry during his many years of work (1983–2008) at Delta; for bolstering national pride and for promoting the export of Israeli-made textile products throughout the world; for his work as an ambassador of the Israeli economy, and for his strengthening of economic peace between Israel, Egypt, and Jordan; for his business initiative, combined with social awareness in establishing Babcom, a company that provides call center services, software, quality testing and a “back office” to large companies; for his efforts in strengthening the periphery by establishing service branches throughout the country; for his contribution to promoting the hiring of women, and encouraging employment opportunities; and for fostering

coexistence, brotherhood, and interpersonal relations between Arabs and Jews, and between the ultra-Orthodox and secular in the workplace.

Olga Tokarczuk, In recognition of her bold writing, touching upon painful and controversial sociopolitical issues, which has forced her to stand up to critics, opponents, and boycotters; for her imagination, originality, and sensitivity in integrating her expertise in the behavioral sciences into her literary work; for her talent, that crosses all borders; and for her books, published in Polish and translated into some forty languages, that have made a name for her in many countries around the world.

Yuval Wagner, In recognition of his initiative in establishing the Access Israel association (1999), which promotes accessibility and integrates people with disabilities, and their families, into society; for his work in placing people with disabilities at the forefront of social awareness in Israel; for his vigorous advancement of an educational doctrine to eliminate discrimination and prejudice regarding disabilities; for his contribution to promoting accessibility legislation that has improved, beyond recognition, the quality of life of men and women with disabilities and special needs; and for his selfless willingness to provide a listening ear and a helping hand to thousands of people with disabilities, who daily encounter accessibility obstacles.