

# From Start-up to Scale-up Nation: Israel's Best Practices and Lessons Learned for Advancing Innovation in the Czech Republic

December 6, 2019

CTU CIIRC Penthouse, Jugoslávských partyzánů 1580/3, Prague 6–Dejvice



## Jacob Fass

**International consultant, former CEO and director of high-tech firms, former distinguished Israeli diplomat.**

**Vice-chairman of the Board of Directors, Prague Advanced Technology Research Innovation Center.**

Since 2011, Jacob has become a sought after international consultant and is an expert on venture capital funds, start-ups, joint ventures and high-tech parks. He has consulted in Israel, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Albania, Montenegro, Japan, Korea and Taiwan. Clients include the City of Vienna ('High Tech City project'), top Israeli infrastructure firm 'Mivtach Shamir', the Czech government, and the Albanian government.

Prior to his work as a consultant, Jacob had over 14 years' experience working as a CEO, chairman, and director for high-tech start-ups. From 2008 to 2014, Jacob was President and CEO of JFI, which represents Israeli companies abroad. From 1977 to 1998, Jacob had a distinguished career in the Israeli diplomatic service. He helped build economic relations between Israel and a number of countries: Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Japan, South Korea, Netherlands, and Taiwan.

Jacob received a BA in Economics and International Affairs and also served in the Israeli Defense Force (1965-1968).

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**The transformation from a start-up to profitable business, the Israeli model.**

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## Jan Dobrovský

**Director of Project Management at the City Hall of Prague, where he supports business and innovation and manages economic diplomacy.**

**He leads project management focused on funds' drawing from the EU programs.**

Jan has led numerous projects resulting in founding the Prague Startup Centre and Market and the business incubation center of the European Space Agency in Prague (ESA BIC Prague), the Prague vouchers subsidy program, the Innovation Market, and projects of innovation partnership. Most recently, Jan's project Trh inovací (Innovation Market), a unique platform promoting cooperation between academia and business, was shortlisted in top three projects in the category Improving the Business Environment in The European Enterprise Promotion Awards (EEPAs).

Jan studied Economy and Cultural studies in Prague as well as in Turkey and China. In 2015, the Res Publica initiative, in cooperation with Google, The Visegrad Fund and The Financial Times, included Jan into the "New Europe 100 list of outstanding challengers" for the region of Central and Eastern Europe.

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## Michael Mizrahi

**Head of the Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Division at Azrieli Academic College of Engineering – Jerusalem.**

A serial entrepreneur and a visionary whose goal is to transform Jerusalem into one of the leading 20 cities in the world for startups and entrepreneurs. He helps fulfil this goal as a member of the board of the nonprofit organization MadeInJLM and Director of the Startup accelerator AtoBe, which operates as part of the Azrieli College of Engineering.

MadeInJLM identifies future innovators and provides them the platform to contribute, connect, mentor and create. What is unique about AtoBe is that its main and only focus is engineering and technology. It provides innovators with state of the art equipment that enables them to work wonders.

<https://il.linkedin.com/in/michael-mizrahi-a5379453>

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**The Story of AtoBe Startup Accelerator. A case study of how innovation thinking, engineering and entrepreneurship can make a difference and impact a city like Jerusalem and help cope with the challenges of the future.**

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## **Michal Mejstřík**

**Economist and professor of Economics at the Charles University in Prague, international consultant and advisor.**

**Vice-chairman of the Board of Directors, Prague Advanced Technology Research Innovation Center.**

Michal studied Econometrics at the University of Economics in Prague and completed his advanced studies with a fellowship at the London School of Economics (1990-91) devoted to financing for business competitiveness, including disruptive innovation. Founder and Chairman of the Institute of Economic Studies, the prestigious Czech economic think tank (1993-2010) that brought with CERGE-IE economy at Charles University among TOP100 world universities.

Over the past 28 years, he has repeatedly been engaged as an external consultant for international organizations (USAID, World Bank, European Commission in Central and Eastern Europe and Asia - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan), Czech government and a number of corporations, either independently or through the company EEIP, a.s. He is acting as the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Korea for business and scientific and technological cooperation in the Czech Republic.

He has published over 150 specialist publications which are frequently cited, especially abroad.

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**New risks and challenges – how to respond**

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## Vojtěch Petráček

**Rector of the Czech Technical University  
in Prague**

In the course of his career, Vojtěch Petráček has been attached to a number of leading institutions, in the Czech Republic and also abroad.

In 2004, he joined the Faculty of Nuclear Science and Physical Engineering of the Czech Technical University in Prague, where he completed his habilitation in 2007. At the faculty, he teaches Experimental Physics, Relativistic Physics of Heavy Ions, and Subatomic Physics, and he is the responsible person for studies in the field of Experimental Nuclear Physics. He is the leader of a research team that has worked on the ALICE, CBM and AEGIS experiments. Within the framework of the ALICE experiment, he was awarded the prize of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic for Young Scientific Workers in 1998 for his work on designing and implementing the linear Silicon Drift Detector (SDD). In addition, he has twice been awarded a Prize of the Rector of the Czech Technical University in Prague for his work on detectors.

His main field of scientific interest is in the physics of ultra-relativistic nuclear collisions and particle physics. In collaboration with his students and colleagues, he attempts to interlink experimental and theoretical aspects of this field of physics within the framework of research carried out at the Faculty of Nuclear Science and Physical Engineering.

From 2010 until 2015, he was vice-rector for Science and Research of the Czech Technical University in Prague.

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## **Robert Pergl**

**Legal expert on new technologies, IoT and security. Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Prague Advanced Technology and Research Innovation Center.**

Founder of a law firm that has been involved in business support, especially of foreign entities in the Czech Republic, for more than 20 years.

In 2010, he founded the Chamber of Public Contract Administrators, the only professional association representing public procurement experts, and is currently its Vice-President.

Since 2018 he is the head of the Safe City working group in the Czech Smart City Cluster, which focuses on creating partnerships between companies, state administration, self-government, knowledge institutions and city residents.

He is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Prague Advanced Technology and Research Innovation Center, where he focuses on research in the areas of digitization, IoT, artificial intelligence and security.



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## Pavel Smutný

**President of the Czech-Israeli Mutual Chamber of Commerce.**

Pavel Smutný is a Czech advocate, entrepreneur, sponsor and philanthropist. He is a partner of the law firm CÍSAŘ, ČEŠKA, SMUTNÝ. He specializes in international investment relations and commercial law.

Since 2009 he has been President of the Czech-Israeli Mutual Chamber of Commerce and is also a member of several other international chambers of commerce.

In 2011, he initiated the establishment of the Arnošt Lustig Prize, awarded annually by the Czech-Israeli Mutual Chamber of Commerce to one of the living Czech citizens who have contributed to maintaining and developing values such as courage and bravery, humanity and justice.

He and his partners founded the Bohemian Heritage Fund, which, through private funds of sponsors, supports extraordinary cultural achievements.

He holds the honour of the President of the Czech Republic for his merits in the state and the insignia of French Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters.

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## Zaki Djemal

**Tech & a social entrepreneur with a track record launching, running and investing in disruptive ideas across industries and sectors.**

Zaki is the CEO of fresh.fund, an early-stage VC fund that specializes in investing in startups founded in university ecosystems. fresh.fund also helps forward-thinking academic institutions build their own in-house investing vehicles to discover and accelerate innovation on campus.

Past adventures include: founding an e-commerce platform for independent fashion brands in Brazil, serving as a humanitarian aid worker in South Sudan, Japan, Haiti, and Nepal, building IsraAID's North American fundraising strategy, and speaking to an audience of 2000 people from the TEDx stage. In 2018 Zaki was selected for the Forbes 30 Under 30 list of emerging tech business leaders. He graduated with honors from Harvard, where he studied Behavioral Economics.

<https://il.linkedin.com/in/zakidjemal>

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**In his talk, Zaki will survey the early stage venture scene in Israel; discuss the funding gap that exists for companies founded at universities, and present fresh.fund's unique investment strategy which focuses on startups founded by students, academic and recent grads.**



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## H.E. Daniel Meron

**Ambassador of the State of Israel  
in the Czech Republic**

Ambassador Daniel Meron served as the Deputy Head of the United Nations and International Organizations Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem.

H.E. Meron was twice posted at the Embassy of Israel in Washington, DC, first as the Counsellor and later as the Minister for Congressional Affairs. In these capacities he advised the Government of Israel on Israel – US relations and liaised between the Israeli government and Congress.

Ambassador began his career at the MFA in 1987. He served as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassies of Israel in Cyprus (1990-1993) and in Norway (1993-1995). Following his return to Israel he worked on the MFA's legal team, and later became the Foreign Policy Advisor to the President of Israel Ezer Weitzman (1997-2000).

H.E. Daniel Meron was the Director of the Department of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs at the MFA (2003-2007). Later on, he was the Coordinator for Sustainable Development at the MFA (2011-12), responsible for Israel's participation at the UN Global Summit Rio+20. He was also responsible at the MFA for the issue of the Jewish Refugees from Arab States.

Ambassador holds an LL.M. in international Law from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and a LL.B. from Bar-Ilan University. He also is a graduate of the NESASenior Executive Seminar of the National Defense University, Washington, DC.

Ambassador is a current member of the Israel Bar Association. He was born in Australia and moved to Israel with his parents in 1968.

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## Noa Yaffe

**Operation Manager of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Division Azrieli Academic College of Engineering.**

Noa oversees the AtoBe Accelerator program and is in charge of building cooperation with international organizations and developing entrepreneurship courses. Noa is the managing director of JLM-IMPACT on behalf of Azrieli College of Engineering and being the point person responsible for developing the entrepreneurship community of AtoBe she is regularly producing events, workshops and Meetups.

Noa is also an analyst at fresh.fund, a VC that is responsible for encouraging and promoting startups coming from the student scene. She went over a hundred and thousands of startup's decks, meeting them and wrote a report in order to decide if they are worth investing in or not.

Noa has a bachelor's degree in social sciences (psychology, sociology, criminology), and an M.A. in Music Therapy. To this day conducts Music therapy research on improving the quality of life for Alzheimer's patients at the Jerusalem Institute of Contemporary Music.

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