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From medicine to coding: The Israeli venture that connects sound, AI, and social impact | Talia Levin

Music-Tech is a new technological arena in which sound is used not only in a musical context, but also as a diagnostic, communication, mechanical and environmental tool - from medical assistance to preventing the spread of fires - and Israel is at the forefront of this activity.

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Israel is not only a cyber and fintech powerhouse. Relatively quietly, far from the spotlight of the classic high-tech industry, a new technological arena is taking shape in Israel that connects code, sound and consciousness. MusicTech Innovation Lab is the innovation hub and dedicated accelerator for the worlds of music, innovation and technology, which seeks to position Israel as a global hub in the field that combines music, sound and frequencies with the development of technological products with business potential and social impact.

, a high-tech **David Friedman** MusicTech Innovation Lab is headed by entrepreneur with a long-standing background in the worlds of technology and **Eli and Ilan Levy** entrepreneurship, alongside other founders, including Dr. . "The connection to music came from a young age," says Friedman. "**Hasson** started in the world of production and music, but already in the late 1980s I realized that Israel does not always allow young people to take initiatives in this field, access to all kinds of projects was difficult. In 2014, we began to develop an idea intended for musicians who did not have business tools, how musical ventures could become businesses."

The idea itself grew and took shape in academia, at the School of Music at the Ono Academic College. "Although a bachelor's degree in music provides basic knowledge, there was no connection to the business world. That's why we established a project that was a kind of mini-incubator, and there we already

started working with people like Attorney Oren Sharon, to first see how we could produce creative solutions and connect the world of music to the world of high-tech."

Oren Sharon The program has been accompanied from its inception by Attorney , Head of the High-Tech Department at the firm of S. Friedman Abramson & Co., and he is responsible for building the legal and business framework of the activity - from defining the accelerator's operating model to the ongoing support of the entrepreneurs, business connections and the entry of strategic partners into the various projects.



Photo: Teat Mandel

"Many times, entrepreneurs enter a room with 'a hundred kilos of stones on their heads.' They don't understand what comes first: patents, copyrights, how to raise money and how to choose the right team," says Sharon. "The importance is beyond the project, but everything beyond. We don't just provide legal advice - we provide practical solutions that connect all the parties, in Israel and abroad. Our goal in this hub is to make the process less complex, to give the knowledge and support to entrepreneurs. Young entrepreneurs or musicians with an idea, no matter how good, don't always know what's important first or what needs to be done, and proper support is the basis for success."

Information in sounds

The field of music-tech connects music and technology and offers new ways to create, share and listen to music, but its impact extends far beyond music alone.

Today, the sounds we create or record can also be used as information tools: sound sensors and advanced software make it possible to identify abnormal breathing or heart rate indicators, track progress in speech or reading in the field of improving education. It can also be purely technical, such as detecting unusual noises in car engines and even detecting fires or other dangers in the environment. Sound becomes information that provides insights and aids in decision-making, and shows how music and sound can be much more than creation: they are useful tools for life, education and safety.

The term MusicTech only started being used in 2018, when Friedman and his team started talking about the connection between music and technology. "It's not just a local thing," he explains. "As happened around the world in the wake of the coronavirus, people saw that the market was changing and that creative solutions needed to be thought about."

The venture consists of two main parts. "An accelerator that promotes ventures in the music-tech field, and secondly, the parent, a platform that provides holistic support to companies, beyond the accelerator, connecting with investors, raising resources, and professional and international validation."

The accelerator is currently in its second cycle, and each cycle has received about 50 to 60 new ventures, all with specific knowledge of the venture itself, but without significant business experience. "This shows how great and significant the growth of the field in Israel is," he explains.

The accelerator promotes collaborations with local and international players: Universal Music Israel, Leumitech, Waves Audio and the Tel Aviv Municipality, which increases the scope of exposure. "We bring in international expertise from Denmark, the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries, to test and verify the feasibility of the products, even before significant investments."

Friedman explains that the combination of music and technology is no coincidence. "Music is just the starting point. We're talking about sound-tech frequencies, AI, neuroscience, medicine, education, and even early detection of fires or engine problems. The Israeli advantage is the engineering and scientific capabilities - and the innovation far beyond what streaming offers."

Who are the entrepreneurs who come to you?

"It's an interesting combination of musicians who think like entrepreneurs, and doctors and engineers from the Technion who develop sound and AI solutions without a musical background. There are also 8200 graduates who are looking for meaning and have found that the field provides personal and social value. Ultimately, it's about connecting technological innovation with social impact, with solutions that can affect education, health, the environment, and more. I want to point out that we plan to expand our activities to international audiences in a new hybrid cycle. Our goal is to create an ecosystem in which every entrepreneur receives the tools, support, and connections they need to produce innovation with real value both in Israel and overseas."

There is also an aspect here that goes beyond technology.

"Some of the projects integrate AI in an integrative way. This turns the entire field of sound into an advanced technology that reaches applications in medicine, education, automobiles, and even identifying fires or engine malfunctions.

"We are also looking for social impact. For example, in the field of education, music can teach various skills through gamification. There are solutions that teach children English or music creation in an intuitive way. The accelerator allows ventures to think outside the box, it's not just music, it's any connection between sound, frequencies and AI. We are creating an ecosystem that allows entrepreneurs to advance their ventures quickly, with holistic support." According to Friedman, the venture is already creating international resonance.

"A company from our accelerator won an international entrepreneurship competition in the field of smart audio technologies. This shows that the Israeli approach - a combination of innovation, AI and sound - can lead to success in the world." The future of the music-tech sector in Israel, he says, is the arrival of international cycles to the hub. "We are already receiving applications from ventures from abroad, and are looking at how to open a hybrid cycle that connects Israeli and international entrepreneurs. Israel is ready for this."

Between man and technology

Joining the conversation are two entrepreneurs who are graduates of the Habib who have already launched a social-musical startup. The first is an electronic darbuka that feels, looks and sounds like an acoustic instrument, but allows for

The electronic darbuka they developed combines a traditional playing experience with advanced technologies: extremely low latency (0.07 ms), connection to headphones and recording systems, a dedicated app with light indicators and visual feedback, which allow for intuitive and fun learning. The instrument is adapted for events, studies and therapy, and it allows playing even in spaces where a traditional darbuka would create unbearable noise. Dib adds: "The goal is to preserve the soul and technique of the traditional instrument, but to provide a solution that is adapted to today's musicians, including children and young people with concentration problems or environmental limitations."

You have great business potential, I understand.

"We have an LOI to order 150 darbukas for a large event for youth in the IDF, and we are in talks with distributors abroad. The vision is educational, therapeutic and performance, a combination of music, experience and technology."

The system allows for real-time feedback from the app. "Instead of taking years to learn notes, with our darbuka you can learn quickly, feel the rhythm and power, and also play quietly without disturbing others. It's an instrument that brings children closer to music and connects hearts."

, which comes from the field of Digital**Shahar Maoz**Another project is SolCme by Therapeutics, and aims to make the opportunity to express oneself musically accessible to every person with a disability. Maoz talks about the event that changed his life: "Until 2022, I was involved in music. I taught, conducted choirs, and performed - then a medical event confined me to bed. Playing music became a physical struggle, and my disability made me look for a new solution."



Photo: AI

Maoz's project is essentially a system that translates body gestures, hand movements, and head movements into sounds in real time, without the need for prior musical knowledge. The instrument enables musical expression even for those who cannot play traditional instruments, thereby creating an experience of success and creative satisfaction.

"One tool is based on hand movements (Hand Synth) and the other on head and facial movements. And the system adapts itself to the user's range of motion, so that no movement is missed. Anyone can create a full musical expression, even without prior experience." As part of the next phase, the system is intended for pilots in rehabilitation centers and sheltered housing. "I'm looking for partners for implementation, so that the tool is accessible and easy to use for everyone." Maoz adds that working on the project was an integral part of his rehabilitation. "I learned to write code and that was part of the rehabilitation. I also realized that I was not alone, that this was not something that would only be useful to me but to millions of people with motor limitations. My goal was to create something experiential and empowering but also accessible. Ultimately, seeing the users succeed, create and feel like musicians is the greatest joy. It's a real impact, connecting people and technology."



Photo: Ofir Maoz