

Innovation Visas for Foreign Entrepreneurs Program (Pilot) Incentive Program No. 28

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1. General

- 1.1 The Israel Innovation Authority (hereinafter: "**Innovation Authority**") facilitates and encourages, directly and indirectly, technological innovation in Israeli industry through a variety of incentive programs, tools and activities.
- 1.2 The State of Israel is known worldwide as a hub of technological innovation, with a uniquely supportive environment for technology entrepreneurship and a global reputation in the fields of hi-tech, entrepreneurship and technological innovation.
- 1.3 The contribution of foreign entrepreneurs to the Israeli economy will be expressed in knowledge and experience in many fields, including those missing in Israel, as well as through entrepreneurs who will continue operating their projects in Israel. Successful projects will increase employment opportunities for the Israeli public and will help to create a vibrant environment of ideas and multinational talent. As a corollary contribution, these entrepreneurs will become goodwill ambassadors for Israel around the world, whether they relocate their activity back to their home country or continue operating in Israel.
- 1.4 To assist with the removal of barriers and enable technology entrepreneurs from around the world to benefit from this unique environment in developing a new technology project in Israel, the Ministry of Economy and Industry decided, in collaboration with the Population and Immigration Authority, to implement a pilot program. The program was based on a Ministry of Economy and Industry's Director-General Directive (the "**Directive**") which provided a regulatory Landing Pad for foreign entrepreneurs seeking to develop projects in Israel's unique environment and considering establishing the project's operations in Israel.
- 1.5 Pursuant to section 56(c) of the transitional provisions of Amendment No. 7 to the Encouragement of Research, Development and Technological Innovation in Industry Law, 5744-1984, following the establishment of the Innovation Authority, the Directive became this incentive program, which will be implemented by the Innovation Authority (the "**Program**").
- 1.6 The Program will operate based on recommendations given by the Innovation Authority to the Population and Immigration Authority in the Ministry of Interior (hereinafter: "**PIBA**") for the award of visas to suitable entrepreneurs. The actual issuance of visas to the entrepreneurs is within the exclusive authority of PIBA, and the Innovation Authority is only a recommending body.

2. Purpose

The Program is intended to regulate the following matters:

- 2.1 The rules and criteria for recognition as a Landing Pad.
- 2.2 The rules and criteria for giving PIBA a recommendation to issue an innovation visa.



2.3 The rules and criteria for giving PIBA a recommendation to issue an expert visa.

3. Definitions

In this Program, the following terms will have the meaning set out next to them, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the body of the Program:

3.1 **The "Website"**

The website of the Israel Innovation Authority.

3.2 **"Innovation visa"**

A "B/2 innovation" residence permit for Israel issued to foreign nationals by PIBA in accordance with PIBA's Pilot Procedure for Processing Foreign Entrepreneurs' Applications for Entry Visas and Residence Permits (Innovation), which will be published on PIBA's website.

3.3 **"Expert visa"**

A B/1 residence and work permit for Israel issued by PIBA in accordance with the procedure published by it on PIBA's website.

3.4 **"The Committee"**

As the term is defined in the Innovation Authority's Incentive Program No. 3.

3.5 **"Foreign technology entrepreneur"**

An individual who is not a resident or citizen of Israel, who has a technological idea which he/she wishes to develop into a product, subject to compliance with additional terms and conditions as stipulated in the Program's regulations.

3.6 **"Landing Pad"**

A company which, as part of its activity engages in the development of ideas in the seed stage in various areas of technology, was approved by the Committee to act as a Landing Pad for a foreign technology entrepreneur in accordance with the provisions of this Program.

4. The Committee

4.1 The work procedures of the Committee will be as set forth in section 4.4 of Innovation Authority Incentive Program No. 3.

4.2 **The Committee's responsibilities and powers**

The Committee is authorized to make any decision required for the implementation of the Program, inter alia:

4.2.1 To approve or reject applications by organization for recognition as a Landing Pad, in accordance with the criteria.

4.2.2 To perform any action for the purpose of examining and evaluating an applicant organization's representations, including the manner of entrepreneurs integration.

4.2.3 To monitor the performance of a Landing Pad and decide whether to set conditions and milestones for its continued recognition as a Landing Pad or to discontinue recognition.



- 4.2.4 To approve or reject applications by foreign entrepreneurs for a recommendation for an innovation visa.
- 4.2.5 To perform any action for the purpose of examining and evaluating a foreign entrepreneur's application.
- 4.2.6 To set procedures for the Committee's work and deliberations.
- 4.2.7 To establish and publish rules and procedures for the implementation of this Incentive Program.
- 4.2.8 To initiate surveys, studies and any other activity that could be of assistance in operating the Incentive Program.

5. Recognition of an organization as a Landing Pad

Recognition as a Landing Pad under this Program will be granted in two stages, as follows:

- 5.1 In the first stage, the Innovation Authority will put out an open call for organizations to apply for recognition as a Landing Pad.
- 5.2 Interested organizations will submit an application for recognition as a Landing Pad according to the Program's form and regulation, which will be published on the Website and include a statement and application as required under of the Ministry of Economy and Industry's Director-General Directive No. 0.4: "Conditioning of Assistance on Social Accountability" (hereinafter: "the **applicant organization**" and "the **Social Accountability Directive**," respectively).
- 5.3 For purposes of the pilot defined under this Program, **the first fifteen applications** received by the date to be published on the Website will be examined on a chronological basis (FIFO).
- 5.4 The Committee will examine the applicant organization's compliance with the definition of a "Landing Pad" as well as its compliance with the conditions of the Social Accountability Directive. After compliance with the above definition and conditions has been verified, the Committee will determine whether the applicant organization meets the criteria set out below, and it may grant recognition to **up to twelve** Landing Pads.
 - 5.4.1 Mutual Enrichment – Quality and availability of a shared workspace allowing the free flow of ideas and feedback between Israeli entrepreneurs and the foreign technology entrepreneur.
 - 5.4.2 Physical and technological infrastructure – Quality and availability of a physical and technological infrastructure suitable for the development of projects.
 - 5.4.3 Professional support – Quality and availability of the professional support offered by the applicant organization for the projects.
 - 5.4.4 Added value – The applicant organization expected contribution to the achievement of the fundable milestone or to finding a continuation **framework** for the foreign entrepreneur's project.
- 5.5 The list of Landing Pads will be published on the Website.



6. Process of Receiving a Recommendation for an Innovation Visa as a Foreign Technology Entrepreneur

- 6.1** A foreign technology entrepreneur wishing to receive a recommendation for an innovation visa ("**recommendation**") must submit an application to the Innovation Authority in accordance with the Program's regulations, which will be published on the Website (the "**entrepreneur's application**"). The entrepreneur's application must include, inter alia, the following:
- 6.1.1 The name of the Landing Pad which he plans to join for the purpose of developing the technological idea, out of the list published per section 5.5 above.
 - 6.1.2 A statement from the Landing Pad named by the entrepreneur regarding the agreement to accept said entrepreneur.
 - 6.1.3 A statement by the foreign technology entrepreneur regarding the funding sources for his subsistence expenses during the entire period of his residence.
- 6.2** The entrepreneurs' applications will be examined according to the chronological order in which they were received (FIFO).
- 6.3** Each application will be examined by a professional examiner appointed by the Innovation Authority, based on the criteria set forth in the Program's regulations as published on the Website, inter alia, with respect to the quality and nature of the foreign technology entrepreneur's relationship with the Landing Pad.
- 6.4** The entrepreneur's application and the professional examiner's opinion will be forwarded to the Committee for consideration of the application. The Committee's decision will be provided in writing to the foreign technology entrepreneur, for notice and use.
- 6.5** A foreign technology entrepreneur whose application for a recommendation under this Program was approved by the Committee and whose wish is to use the recommendation in order to come to Israel and develop his project, must submit to PIBA an application for an innovation visa for the period of his planned project at the Landing Pad, up to a maximum of two years. The approval and issuance of an innovation visa, the extension of its term, the limit on the number of visas issued by PIBA and any other related matter are within the exclusive authority of PIBA. The Innovation Authority or anyone acting on its behalf is not authorized to grant an innovation visa to anyone and the recommendation provided by the Committee will in no way affect the discretion or powers of PIBA in issuing or extending innovation visas or limiting their number or in any related matter as aforesaid.

7. Issuance of a Continuation Visa in the Program – Expert Visa

- 7.1** A foreign technology entrepreneur who, at the end of two years of residence under an innovation visa, wishes to stay on in Israel and to be paid for his work in the project, or to stay on in Israel for the purpose of developing the project, must act according to the following rules:
- 7.1.1 The foreign entrepreneur must establish a company in Israel for the purpose of developing the project in the country.
 - 7.1.2 Following the establishment of a company as aforesaid, the foreign technology entrepreneur must submit an application under one of the incentive programs run by



the Innovation Authority, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the applicable program. Such an application may include a request for government funding. The application will be examined by a professional examiner in accordance with the regulations of the specific program.

7.1.3 If the committee approves the foreign technology entrepreneur's application, the decision will be sent to the entrepreneur together with a recommendation by the Innovation Authority to grant an expert visa, and the entrepreneur may include the recommendation in the application for an expert visa submitted by him to PIBA.

7.2 The approval and issuance of an expert visa, the extension of its term, the limit on the number of visas issued by PIBA and any other related matter are within the exclusive authority of PIBA. The Innovation Authority or anyone acting on its behalf is not authorized to grant an expert visa to anyone and the recommendation provided will in no way affect the discretion or powers of PIBA in issuing or extending expert visas or limiting their number or in any related matter as aforesaid.

8. Miscellaneous

8.1 The provisions of the Program and the Committee's recommendation may not be regarded as an undertaking towards the entrepreneur or anyone else to approve any future application for support under any incentive program in the Startup Division or other incentive program operated by the Innovation Authority or any payment to the entrepreneur.

8.2 The Innovation Authority and any of the authorities of the State of Israel do not bear responsibility or liability for the entrepreneur's agreement with the Landing Pad.

8.3 Grants of the Innovation Authority under any incentive program will be provided based on the conditions regulating a particular program, including the authority or discretion of the committee to set conditions with respect to the submission of applications for support under those programs, and inter alia to limit the number of applications made or the number of approvals granted.

8.4 To avoid doubt, the approval of an application under this Program does not confer eligibility to receive any monetary grant, and this Program may not be regarded as an undertaking by the Innovation Authority or any other organization to make any payment.

8.5 The Program's regulations and any notices issued by the Committee in accordance with the Program will be published on the Website.

9. Effective Date

This Program is effective as of September 21, 2015. The Program will be implemented on a pilot basis for three years. At the end of two years the Innovation Authority and PIBA will decide whether, and in what format, to continue operating it.