W.F. ALBRIGHT INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

GATEWAY TO CIVILIZATIONS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD



CASE FOR SUPPORT

aiar.org

THE ALBRIGHT AT A GLANCE

Year Founded
1900

Current Location
JERUSALEM
home since 1925

Endowment
~ $7 MILLION
as of October 2026

Centennial Campaign
$3.5 MILLION RECEIVED

Fellowships Offered (2027 – 28)
10 – 11

Trustee Annual Participation
100%

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For more than a century, the Albright has offered something rare. It is a place in Jerusalem where people who study this region’s past, whatever their background, work side by side and learn from one another. As a Fulbright fellow here myself, I have seen what that makes possible, for young scholars and senior ones alike. Every one of our trustees gives to the Albright, every year. We invite you to join us.



Eric H. Cline
President, Board of Trustees

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For me, the Albright is a place that combines scholarly excellence with a sense of community. In a world highly influenced by political divides, the Albright is a microcosm of its own in which scholars from diverse backgrounds come together to find common ground.



Shulamit Miller
NEH Fellow
2025-2026



For over a century, the **W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research (AIAR)** has been a remarkable resource for research and discovery, deepening our understanding of the legacy of the Near East and eastern Mediterranean and its relevance to our world today.

AIAR's support has enabled scholars to unearth, study, interpret, and preserve the physical remains and textual records of the many civilizations that have lived in the lands of the Near East.

In doing so, the Albright Institute has promoted public understanding of the mosaic of ancient Levantine cultures from which the world's greatest monotheistic religions arose.

From the Albright Institute's 1900 Foundation Charter:

> THE SCHOOL SHALL BE OPEN TO DULY QUALIFIED APPLICANTS OF ALL RACES AND BOTH SEXES, WHOLLY FREE FROM OBLIGATIONS OR PREFERENCES AS RESPECT TO ANY RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION.



William Foxwell Albright's excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim

DISCOVERY, THEN AND NOW

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

On 18 February 1948 the telephone rang at the American School in Jerusalem. The School's cook, Omar Jibreen, answered. A priest from St. Mark's Monastery was asking for help with some old manuscripts. Omar fetched John Trever, a young fellow serving as acting director.

Three days later the scrolls were brought to the School. In the basement, now the lower level of the library, Trever photographed them with his own camera, with his fellow William Brownlee at his side. He sent prints to William Foxwell Albright, who replied with congratulations "on the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times."

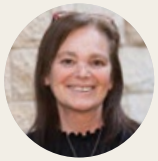
These were the first photographs of these scrolls. The right scholars, the right expertise and the right place, together. The Albright continues to make discovery possible.

ISRAEL'S PARTNER FOR HERITAGE

In 2026 the Albright and the Israel Antiquities Authority signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding covering research, training and joint publication. The agreement also makes the Albright the gateway for American institutions that want to work with the Authority.

We are already putting this partnership into practice. In the Galilee, with funding from the US Department of State through the US Embassy in Jerusalem, the Albright is working with Israeli partners such as the Israel Antiquities Authority to conserve and present the mosaics of the ancient synagogue at Huqoq and the Church of the Apostles at el-Araj, on a heritage trail that visitors of every faith can walk, alongside a second project at Sepphoris.

> "For more than a century, the Albright Institute has served as the principal American academic institution in Jerusalem ... and the primary and most effective institutional channel through which the IAA engages with American Humanities researchers.



Dr. Débora Sandhaus
Chief Scientist,
Israel Antiquities Authority

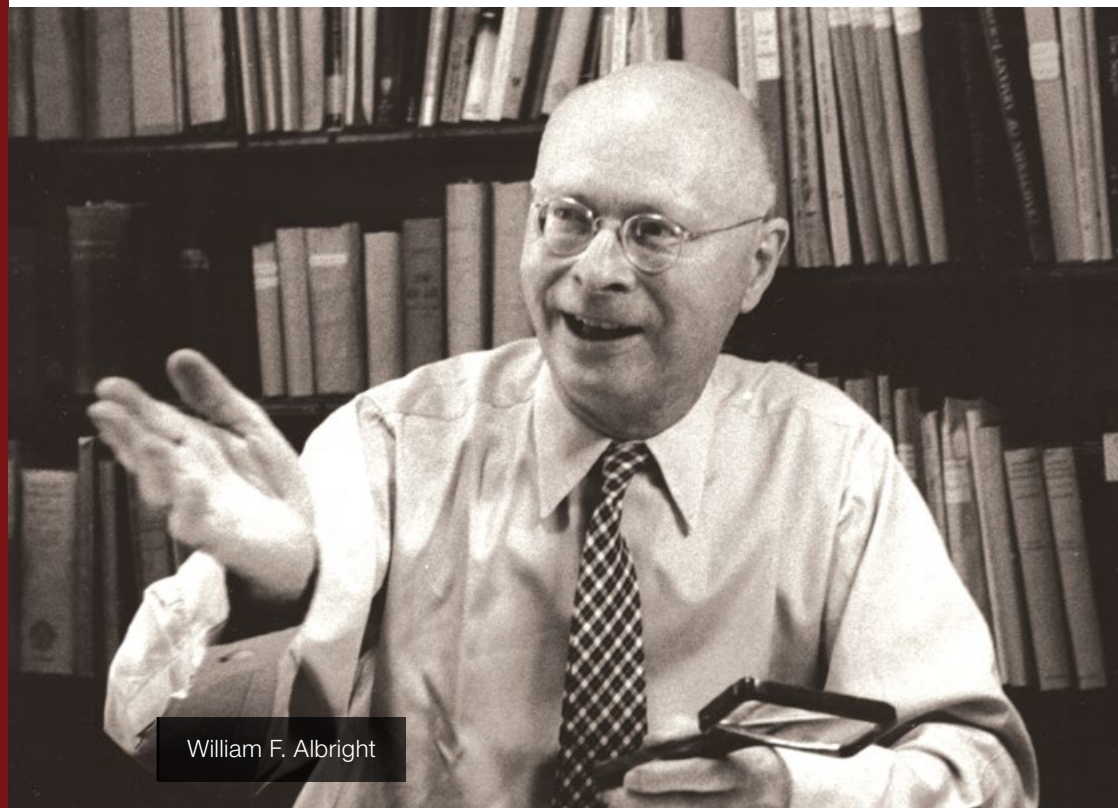
BACKGROUND

The history of AIAR is the history of American archaeology in the Near East. AIAR dates back to 1900, when a group of American scholars and philanthropists established the American School of Oriental Study and Research in what was then Ottoman Palestine. Their founding goal was to establish a base for American scholars conducting research and excavations in the **"Holy Land."** The group organized a consortium of 21 colleges, universities, and seminaries to build the Jane Dows Nies Memorial Building in what is now East Jerusalem. This gave the "Jerusalem School" a permanent home — and it is still our home today.

In 1920, **William Foxwell Albright** became Director of the Institute that would later bear his name. He served as Director for 12 years and significantly deepened its involvement in major archaeological projects and biblical studies. Today, Albright is widely regarded as the **"Father of American Biblical Archaeology."**

> **Today, AIAR serves as a place where generations of students and researchers from across the world can engage in the shared pursuit of research excellence in an atmosphere of mutual respect and intellectual integrity.**

A commitment to cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural collaboration is at the heart of AIAR's mission. The Albright Institute connects past and present, advancing scholarship on behalf of everyone whose history runs through these lands.



William F. Albright

THE PATH FORWARD

In 2025, AIAR celebrated the centennial of its iconic building in Jerusalem and recommitted to supporting research that widens our understanding of the ancient Near East.

As we look to the future, we invite you to partner with us as we build on our achievements and develop new areas of research.



01

SUPPORTING & SHARING ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

Since AIAR's founding, its directors and fellows have made significant contributions to the field of Near Eastern archaeology. The Dead Sea Scrolls, which Albright called "**the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times,"** were first examined and photographed in the AIAR basement in 1948.

AIAR's directors and trustees have played essential roles in, for example, authenticating the Scrolls, excavating the Solomonic Gate at Gezer, discovering the Ekron Royal Dedicatory Inscription, unearthing the Dionysos mosaic at Sepphoris, producing primary textbooks on the region, and setting international standards for multi-disciplinary excavations.

Most recently, in partnership with the Israel Antiquities Authority, AIAR has committed to conserving and presenting ancient mosaics at an ancient synagogue and an ancient church as part of a "mosaic trail" connecting several ancient Jewish and Christian heritage sites in the Galilee. This project speaks to AIAR's efforts to offer insight and meaningful access into the rich, shared histories of the Near East.

Pictured: February 1948. John Trever photographs the Community Rule scroll at the American School in Jerusalem. Alongside the Great Isaiah Scroll, which Trever also photographed, it was among the first Dead Sea Scrolls discovered.



Archaeologists from Chapel Hill North Carolina, led by Albright Trustee Prof Jodi Magness, uncover a mosaic showing Samson carrying the gate of Gaza, Huqoq synagogue, Galilee.
Photo by Jim Haberman

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Throughout my career, the Albright Institute has been vital to my development as a scholar and archaeologist. As a graduate student, a series of fellowships at the Albright enabled me to carry out the research and writing of my dissertation. Since then, my research has been supported by other fellowships at the Albright, including the publication of the Masada pottery and, most recently, my book on Jerusalem Through the Ages (2024).

Many of my colleagues and students have also benefited from Albright fellowships, including Jocelyn Burney, who was in residence while writing her dissertation and now holds a tenure-track position at the University of Missouri. Members of my excavation team regularly stay at the Albright while working on the publication of our finds, which are stored in shipping containers on the institute’s grounds.

The Albright provides a unique setting where students and scholars from abroad meet and interact with their local (Israeli and Palestinian) counterparts. Many of these locals attend lectures and other events sponsored by the Albright, and make use of its library facilities. It is impossible to overstate the value of the Albright to the archaeological and scholarly community, and its importance as a representative of American presence in the region.



Jodi Magness
Gitin Distinguished Professor | 2021-2022
and Trustee

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The Albright Institute offers a rare neutral and safe space in Jerusalem for Israeli, Palestinian, and international scholars to work together in sustained, serious dialogue. Its extraordinary library and dense intellectual community shaped my research and enabled interdisciplinary collaborations that would not have been possible elsewhere.

The fellowship advanced both my scholarship and my understanding of the region through daily exchange, shared inquiry, and collective engagement with the past.



Roy Marom
Frerichs Fellow
2024-2025

02

BRINGING INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS TOGETHER

Building upon its established competency in scholarly collaboration and international exchange, AIAR serves as a central hub for interaction among Americans, Israelis, Palestinians, and other nationalities in archaeological excavations, refinement of techniques, documentation, research, publications, lectures, workshops, and conferences.

03

PROMOTING SCHOLARSHIP IN BIBLICAL AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Nearly one-third of AIAR fellowships in the last decade have focused on biblical and religious studies. Examples include: research on the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls, biblical books (Genesis, Judges, Habakkuk, Chronicles, Psalms), early Christian texts and myths, Apocalyptic literature, the conversion of Christian manuscripts to codices, early Christian pilgrims, monastic diversity in the Negev, the Crusades, and more.

I first came to the Albright as part of the Hesi dig in 1971, and immediately it became the home for the entire staff and my home in Jerusalem ever since. I have stayed and researched at the Albright too many times to count. Being a member of this community has been important for my research, contacts, and friendship.

Twice I spent months at the Albright serving as Annual Professor, most recently working on a final report. As with any community it is important to give back to support the community, and currently I serve as Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.



Jeffrey Blakely

Senior Albright Fellow 2025-2026, and Chair of the Board of Trustees

04

SUPPORTING EMERGING SCHOLARS

With its impressive library, diverse academic community, and welcoming guest-house, AIAR serves as an essential resource enabling emerging scholars to dedicate themselves fully to their research. AIAR's fellowship programs have funded countless junior scholars at a pivotal moment in their careers, offering the connections, research opportunities, and scholarly dialogue that set the groundwork for a fruitful academic career. Former AIAR fellows later introduce AIAR to their own students, ensuring that the legacy of AIAR endures across generations.

05

BUILDING BRIDGES AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Over the course of a century, AIAR has had a positive economic and cultural impact in the heart of East Jerusalem. Throughout these decades, it has provided employment opportunities for local residents and welcomed Arab students and teachers to attend lectures. During the COVID-19 pandemic, with the Albright Institute closed, AIAR's chef, Hisham M'farreh, started "Meals by Hisham." This initiative offered a tangible service to the community by offering three-course meals twice a week for pick-up or delivery. Engagement with our Jerusalem neighbors has provided work and learning opportunities and continues to inspire connection and mutual understanding within a vibrant research community.



W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research Richard J. Scheuer Library Collection

CONCLUSION

Over 50 years since its incorporation, 100 years since its landmark building was dedicated, and 125 years since its founding, the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research remains committed to carrying forward its rich legacy as a vital contributor to our understanding of the past.

As one of the most important research institutions dedicated to the archaeology, history, religions, cultures, and languages of the ancient Near East, AIAR continues to advance scholarly and public understanding into the development of the many civilizations that arose across the Near East and the origins of the three great monotheistic religions that emerged.

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US.



Through a series of public lectures and weekly workshops, the Albright Institute provides a wide space for constructive discussion and consultation among researchers about the future of archaeological, museum, and academic research work... My stay there was so fruitful and productive that enabled me to produce a monograph, which is now published, which helped me build new relationships and was an important incentive for my promotion at the university where I work, and improved my research and academic performance on international and local levels.



Issam Halayqa
Gitin Professor
2024-2025

The Albright Institute has been at the center of my whole career, from the time when I was a graduate student to my recent tenure as Gitin Professor, providing me with their incredible resources, generous funding, and wide scholarly networks.

But, above all, what makes the Albright special is its people: the Albright is a center of collegial interactions, with people from all over the world and diverse backgrounds sharing their work and lives in this quiet, beautiful oasis at the heart of Jerusalem.



Juan Manuel Tebes
Gitin Professor
2023-2024

As an international hub for leading archaeologists and scholars, the AIAR has provided an exceptional environment for my research — a space that is both quiet and intellectually stimulating.

Positioned at the crossroads of East and West Jerusalem, and particularly under the thoughtful stewardship of Dr. James Fraser, the Institute fosters respectful academic exchange and engagement with scholars in related fields, while also opening its doors to the local community.



Sonia Najjar
NEH Fellow
2025-2026

WAYS TO SUPPORT

Your gift enables us to support emerging scholars, continue our legacy of archaeological discovery, and promote cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural collaboration in the field of Near Eastern archaeology.

The AIAR's endowment stands at approximately $7 million, with its yielded interest covering roughly one-third of organizational expenses.

However, due to reductions in federal funding, alongside lower enrollment at the hostel driven by the pandemic and ongoing geopolitical conflict, the AIAR must secure additional endowment funding and at least $800,000 in annual operating support.

IMMEDIATE SUPPORT

- **Sponsor a fellowship.** Awards range from $3,000 to $20,000 and cover room, half-board, and a stipend for doctoral, post-doctoral, and senior scholars.
- **Contribute to the Albright's Annual Fund** to support the yearly program at the institute, providing scholars and students a home in Jerusalem for research, study, and field work.
- **Purchase a personalized paving stone** for our Pathway of Honor, which will pave the new terrace in the Kershaw Garden area of our campus.

SUSTAINED SUPPORT

- **Dedicate a space at the Albright Institute** in your name. Naming opportunities include common rooms, guest-house rooms, offices, library spaces, and more.
- **Endow a fellowship** in your name to support emerging and established scholars in perpetuity.
- **Join the Legacy Society** by naming the Albright Institute as a beneficiary in your estate plans.

For more information on all giving opportunities, including naming opportunities, endowed fellowships, and planned giving, contact Dorot Director

DOROT DIRECT
director@aiar.org
philanthropy@aiar.org

The Albright Institute is a U.S. 501(c)(3) non-profit organization formed to advance archaeological and historical knowledge and to educate the public about the past and how it is studied. Contributions are tax deductible in the USA.



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