

Emigrant Israeli scientists want to return

*More than 3,000 express
interest in state's offer to
aid in job placement*

• By JUDY SIEGEL

A record 3,027 expatriate Israeli scientists and researchers working abroad and interested in returning have registered abroad with the Israel Academy of Science and Humanities' special office to find work for them here.

Hundreds of them who have already returned will attend a job fair and lectures at the academy in Jerusalem on Thursday as guests of the new president of the academy, Prof. Nili Cohen.

The office was established by the academy in 2007.

Since then, more than 500 returning scientists have come home, most of them from the US. A total of 430 have gotten work as researchers on the staff of universities, colleges and state research institutes, with others working in post-doctoral positions.

Of the 3,027, a total of 2,198 have doctoral degrees, and 658 are studying for their Ph.D.'s. Nearly 1,750 are in the US and 228 from England, 94 in Germany, 52 Australia and 39 France.

The academy reported that new applicants have been registering daily in recent months. Ninety have come home in 2015.

Tel Aviv University hired 73 in the past few years, followed by Ben-Gurion University with 63, the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology 53, the Weizmann Institute of Science and Bar-Ilan University 44 each, University of Haifa 35, Ariel University 18 and the Open University nine.

Questionnaires filled out by the scientists abroad found that the main factors that prevent their return are "the different style of running things in Israel," fear of the red tape, lack of transparency and concern that they won't be able to find permanent jobs.

The longer they live abroad, the more they worry about their security.

The existence of the academy gives them a feeling of security and of being in contact with Israel, they said. Of all those registered, a third are in medicine and the life sciences, a third in exact sciences and engineering and the rest in the humanities and social sciences.

Registration for the event is still open at the academy's website at www.academy.ac.il.