

Instead of National supercomputer: Next Silicon, UnifabriX and two more companies will establish an R&D lab for AI and supercomputing

The project's budget is NIS 30 million, of which NIS 20 million will be provided by the Innovation Authority and the rest by Next Silicon and three other companies ■ "The goal of the lab is to lower entry barriers for researchers and companies, and to encourage Israeli innovation".

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Server farms in Romania Photo: Akos Stiller/Bloomberg



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The Israeli start-up company NextSilicon, founded by Elad Raz, won a tender from the Innovation Authority - and will lead the establishmer

a research and development laboratory in the field of artificial intelligence and supercomputing.

The construction budget will be up to NIS 30 million, of which about NIS 20 million will be financed by the Innovation Authority. The rest will be financed by Next Silicon and a group of three companies that won together with it.

The tender is one of the alternatives formulated by the Innovation Authority as an alternative to the [shelved plan](#) to establish a national supercomputer. The goal is to establish a laboratory, in practice a small server center, which will include advanced computing technologies, including central processors (CPU), graphics processors (GPU), high-speed communication equipment and more.

The laboratory will also include the products and equipment of Next Silicon (acceleration cards for supercomputing) as well as of the Israeli start-ups **UnifabriX**, Hailo and Xsight, which were chosen together with Next Silicon to establish the research and development laboratory.

The purpose of the lab is to provide researchers and companies in Israel with services and supercomputing infrastructures that are currently not accessible through public cloud services. The laboratory services will be granted in exchange for payment to the companies that operate the laboratory. According to the Authority's statement, "the infrastructure will be used for research and development of accelerators, hardware components, communication and infrastructure software. The purpose of the laboratory's activity is to lower the entry barriers for researchers and companies in the field and thereby encourage groundbreaking Israeli entrepreneurship and innovation."

Dror Bin, CEO of the Innovation Authority, explained: "Today, due to a lack of this type of infrastructure in Israel, many of the start-ups are forced to choose between establishing an extremely expensive infrastructure themselves (something that makes it difficult for them to grow) and between receiving the services required by huge companies in the world."

According to him, this "leads to 'knowledge flight' at an early stage and progress in development paths in other countries. This project aims to change the existing situation and create a platform that will be a viable alternative for researchers and companies to continue research and activities in Israel."