

The New Center for Russian Culture Opens at the University's Raanana Campus



RUSSKIY MIR FOUNDATION



Executive Director of The Russkiy Mir Foundation, Prof. Vyacheslav Nikonov (L.) and Prof. Hagit Messer-Yaron, President of The Open University

The *Russkiy Mir Center for Russian Culture* – the first of its kind in Israel – was inaugurated at the Open University's Raanana campus thanks to funding from the "Russian World" Foundation, a public foundation dedicated to advancing and disseminating Russian culture throughout the world.

Why was the Open University selected?

When the Russian World Foundation decided to establish its first cultural center in Asia – in Israel, in fact – they turned to their Cultural Attaché at the Russian Embassy in Israel for a recommendation. Which Israeli university would best be able to extend academic sponsorship for the new Center? The Cultural Attaché's recommendation: The Open University.

Director of the "Russian Project" Dr. Victoria Libin, who runs the Open

University's courses in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) cites three reasons for the selection of the Open University.

First, the success of the "Russian Project" is proof that the University is capable of conducting a diverse cultural project in the Russian language.

Second, the University's advanced technology means that we can courses offered on the Raanana campus available in many other locations throughout Israel.

Third, the Open University's nationwide network of learning centers enables effective dissemination of the Center's activities to all corners of the country.

Prof. Georgi Tuloraya, Coordinator of the Asian-African region of the Foundation, visited Israel in September and signed an agreement for joint cooperation with the Open University.

Located in the University's library building on the Raanana Campus, the Center houses a library, video, film collection, and computer stations which carry programs and presentations on museums, theaters and other Russian cultural treasures – from Dostoevsky, to Pushkin and Chekhov, from Mussorgsky to Rimski-Korsakov, and from Moiseyev Dance Company to the Bolshoi Ballet.

At the inaugural ceremony, the Executive Director of the Russkiy Mir Foundation, Prof. Vyacheslav Nikonov (grandson of Vyacheslav Molotov, Stalin's legendary Minister of Foreign Affairs), a noted historian and political consultant and analyst, eloquently spoke about the triangular relationship between Russia and the United States and Israel (which host the largest Russian diaspora populations).

Special events are planned for the month of May in celebration of 65 years marking the end of World War II.