



**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES



# Message From the Rector

In an era when the world faces mounting environmental, social, and economic challenges, the role of universities has become more vital than ever. Institutions of higher education are not only centers of learning but also agents of transformation — shaping knowledge, values, and actions that define the future of our planet and humanity.

At Biruni University, we embrace this global responsibility with determination and vision. Guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we are committed to advancing sustainability through excellence in education, innovative research, and community-centered impact.

Our mission extends beyond academic achievement; it is about producing knowledge that heals, transforms, and sustains life in all its forms.

As a pioneering health sciences university, we channel our scientific expertise toward creating solutions that enhance well-being and social equity. Our multidisciplinary approach allows us to integrate health, innovation, and sustainability — transforming research into real-world benefits for people and communities. The projects and studies we carry out, particularly in the fields of medicine, health, and technology, stand as concrete reflections of this commitment.

Our understanding of sustainability transcends academic boundaries. It is woven into the fabric of our campuses, hospitals, and community initiatives — from energy efficiency and environmentally friendly infrastructure to nurturing students with the awareness and capacity to become responsible global citizens.

Through the dedication of our academic and administrative teams, and the unwavering support of our partners, Biruni University continues to build a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future. Together, we reaffirm our pledge to serve humanity through science and compassion — today and for generations to come.



**Prof. Dr. Adnan Yüksel**  
Rector, Biruni University

# Message From the Editor

The world is entering an age of profound transformation — one that demands wisdom as much as it demands action. Climate disruption, social fragmentation, and economic imbalance have made it clear that the systems which once defined progress can no longer sustain it. Humanity needs a new compass — one that points toward balance, compassion, and collective renewal.

Universities stand at the very heart of this change. They are not merely institutions of teaching and research; they are the laboratories of humanity's future — places where science, conscience, and purpose must meet.

At Biruni University, we see sustainability not as a goal to be reached, but as a way of being. It is the thread that weaves through our research, our classrooms, our hospitals, and our partnerships. It is how we measure success —

by the difference we make in people's lives and the legacy we leave for the generations to come.

Guided by the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**, we are reimagining higher education as a force for healing — for reconnecting human progress with planetary well-being, for bridging innovation with empathy, and for transforming knowledge into impact.

Our mission is both scientific and moral: to cultivate minds that create, question, and care; to generate ideas that build a more equitable, peaceful, and sustainable world. Every discovery, every collaboration, every act of learning becomes part of a larger story — the story of humanity's renewal through knowledge.

This report is more than an evaluation of where we stand; it is a reflection of who we choose to be. Biruni University stands as a living commitment

to the idea that education can heal, science can serve, and together we can build a future worthy of hope.



**Aslıhan Güzin ALSAN, P.h.D. FHEA**  
Director of Institutional Impact,  
Visibility and Corporate Reputation



# BİRÜNİ UNIVERSITY COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Cities are the living mirrors of humanity - places where our values, systems, and relationships converge into form. They are both the engines of progress and the reflections of inequality. To make cities sustainable is to reimagine how we live together - how we design, share, and care for the spaces that hold our collective life.

At Biruni University, we embrace Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities as a call to cultivate environments where human well-being, culture, and ecology coexist in harmony. We believe that the quality of a city is measured not only by its infrastructure, but by its soul - by how it includes, protects, and uplifts the people who inhabit it.

Our mission is to contribute to cities that are safe, resilient, and humane - cities that serve as ecosystems of learning, health, and belonging. As a university deeply rooted in the health sciences, we understand that urban sustainability is inseparable from human health. Clean air, accessible transportation, equitable housing,

and community cohesion are not luxuries; they are public health imperatives.



Through research, education, and civic collaboration, Biruni University works to strengthen the social and environmental fabric of urban life. We connect science with

empathy, design with purpose, and policy with participation. Every project we undertake - from waste management to community health initiatives - reflects our conviction that sustainable cities begin with sustainable citizens.

This report captures our continuing journey to bridge innovation and compassion - to create living cities that breathe with humanity, purpose, and hope.

## Our Approach: Rethinking Urban Life for a Sustainable Future

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At Biruni University, our approach to SDG 11 focuses on designing inclusive, resilient, and human-centered urban systems. We understand that sustainable cities are built not only through technology, but through trust and collaboration. Our philosophy rests on three key principles: Resilience, Inclusion, and Connectivity.

- **Resilience:** We promote urban systems that can adapt to climate challenges, demographic shifts, and social change while safeguarding public health and safety.
- **Inclusion:** We support the creation of spaces that welcome diversity, ensure accessibility, and prioritize social equity in every dimension of urban life.
- **Connectivity:** We emphasize cooperation among institutions, citizens, and local governments to foster cities that are cohesive, data-driven, and future-ready.

Our goal is to inspire a new paradigm of urban living - one that harmonizes progress with balance, growth with responsibility, and innovation with human values.



## Institutional Framework: Integrating Sustainability Into Urban Life

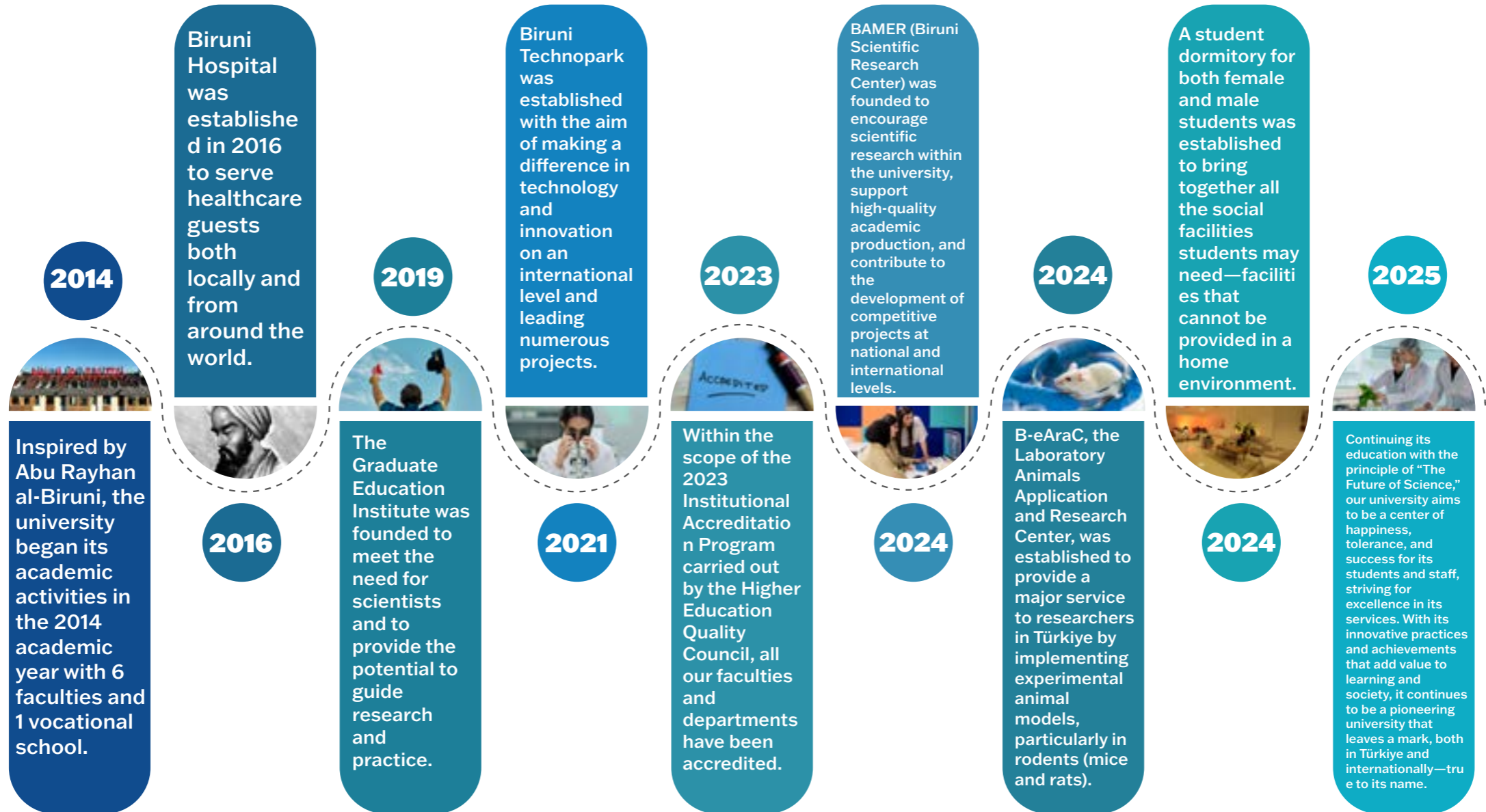
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Biruni University's institutional framework connects knowledge production with community transformation.

- **Urban Health and Resilience Research:** Faculty and students engage in projects addressing air quality, urban planning, mobility, and disaster preparedness - translating data into policy insights.
- **Green Campus Model:** Our campus serves as a microcosm of sustainable urban living - featuring green spaces, energy efficiency, and accessible design that promote environmental stewardship.
- **Community Partnerships:** Collaborations with municipalities and NGOs strengthen resilience through joint initiatives in waste reduction, sustainable transport, and public health awareness.
- **Cultural Preservation:** We celebrate and integrate local heritage, art, and community narratives into educational and outreach activities, ensuring that modernization does not erase identity.
- **Sustainable Infrastructure:** Continuous investment in smart technologies, waste management systems, and environmentally conscious facilities ensures that our own physical environment models the future we envision.

At Biruni, sustainability is not a distant vision but a lived experience - a daily practice of caring for the shared spaces that define who we are together.

# O U R S T O R Y



# O u r V i s i o n

To be a pioneering university that, true to its name, leaves a lasting mark — leading change through knowledge, innovation, and impact.

# O u r M i s s i o n

To be an innovative and leading university that cultivates qualified individuals through transformative education, produces original knowledge at both national and international levels, and contributes to solving societal challenges with scientific and ethical responsibility.

# C O R E V A L U E S



## K n o w l e d g e

Commitment to learning, discovery, and the pursuit of truth as the foundation of progress.



## W i s d o m

Using knowledge with depth, reflection, and ethical judgment to serve humanity.



## H u m a n i t y

Placing human dignity, empathy, and compassion at the heart of education, research, and service.



## A c a d e m i c F r e e d o m

Protecting the right to think, question, and create freely within an environment of respect and integrity.



## P i o n e e r i n g S p i r i t

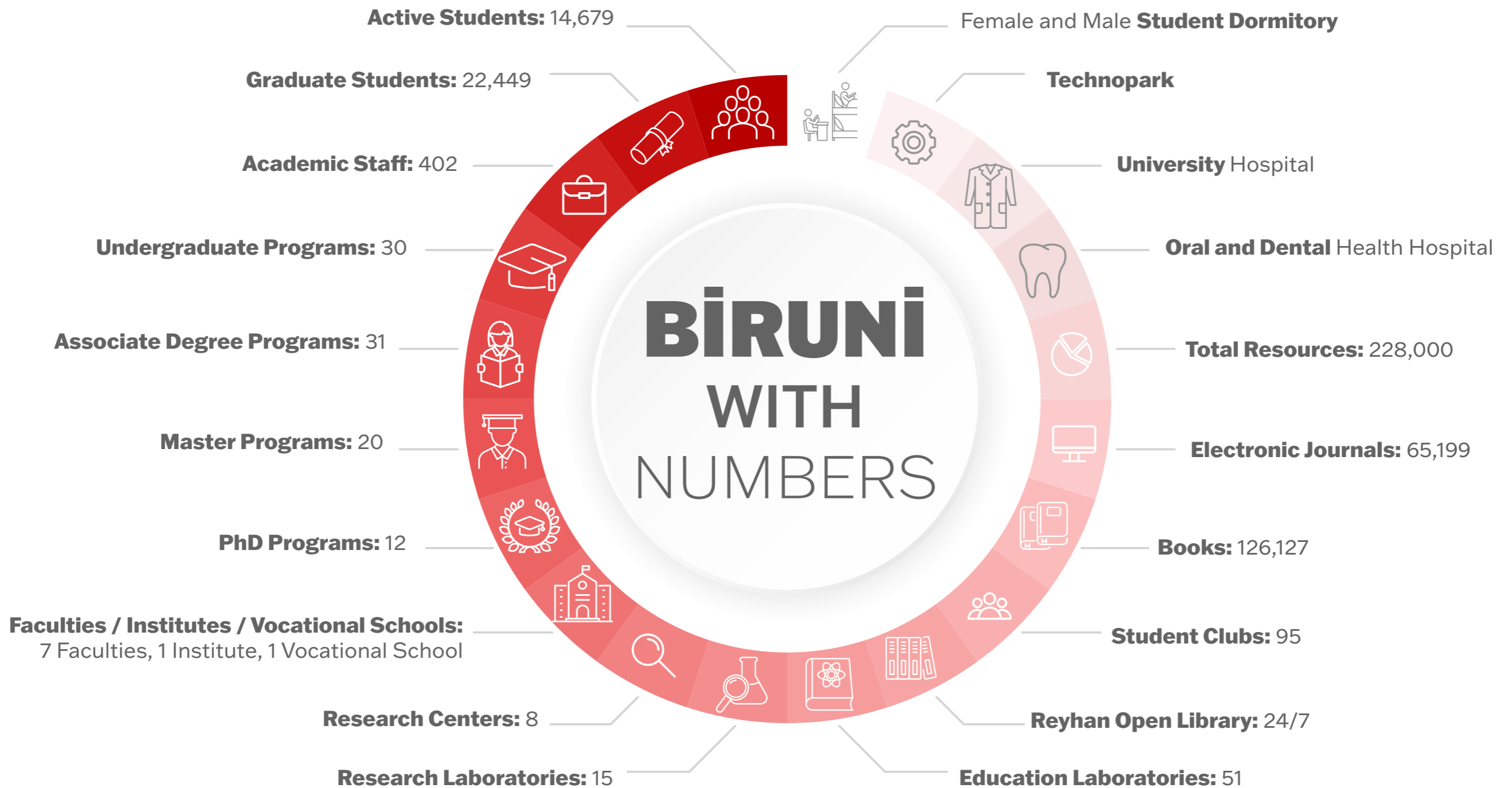
Challenging conventions with creativity and vision; leading transformative change in education and science.



## C o u r a g e

Acting with integrity and resilience in the face of uncertainty — daring to stand for what is right and meaningful.

# BİRÜNİ WITH NUMBERS



**766,641,193 TL**  
**University Expenditure**

**93.500 TL**  
**University Expenditure  
on Arts and Heritage**

## Traffic Sign Recognition and Dynamic Route Planning for Autonomous Vehicles

### Aim:

To develop an artificial intelligence-driven system for recognizing traffic signs and dynamically planning optimal routes for autonomous vehicles within urban environments.

### Description:

This project applies computer vision, deep learning, and intelligent transportation algorithms to enable autonomous vehicles to interpret real-time traffic conditions and respond adaptively to road regulations, obstacles, and environmental changes. The system integrates smart city data and sensor networks to improve route safety, reduce congestion, and optimize energy use.

### Impact:

The research contributes to safer, more efficient, and sustainable urban transportation systems. By reducing traffic accidents, travel time, and fuel consumption, it supports the development of eco-friendly mobility infrastructures and advances the integration of autonomous vehicles into modern smart cities.

### SDG 11 Contribution:

Aligned with SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, this project promotes sustainable urban mobility and innovation in transport systems, supporting Target 11.2 — providing access to safe, affordable, and sustainable transport for all. It plays a vital role in shaping the future of intelligent, low-carbon urban mobility.



## A Synthetic Approach to Ballet - The Rehabilitative Integration of Ballet and Yoga



### Aim:

To explore the integration of ballet and yoga techniques in a rehabilitative context, promoting physical and mental well-being while contributing to sustainable access to cultural and therapeutic practices.

### Description:

This interdisciplinary project brings together performing arts, physical therapy, and psychology to design a structured movement program that blends the expressive discipline of ballet with the restorative principles of yoga. The initiative seeks to make artistic and physical rehabilitation practices accessible to wider urban populations, including individuals with mobility limitations or those in recovery from physical trauma.

### Impact:

By merging art and wellness, the project fosters inclusive cultural spaces that support health, creativity, and community connection. It demonstrates how urban cultural programs can contribute to sustainable well-being and enrich the social fabric of cities through art-based rehabilitation.

### SDG 11 Contribution:

This initiative supports SDG 11 targets on inclusive and sustainable urbanization by promoting accessible cultural participation and well-being-oriented public programs. It reflects the role of arts and culture in creating sustainable, human-centered cities that value both health and heritage.

## Location-Based Emergency Exit Guidance System for Disaster Situations

### Aim:

To develop an intelligent, location-based emergency guidance system that directs individuals to the safest evacuation routes during natural or man-made disasters in real time.

### Description:

This project integrates geolocation technologies, Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, and AI-driven navigation algorithms to create a system capable of dynamically updating evacuation routes based on environmental conditions such as fire, structural damage, or crowd density. By leveraging real-time data from mobile devices and connected infrastructure, the system can guide users to the nearest safe exit with visual, auditory, or haptic alerts, supporting both indoor and outdoor environments.

### Impact:

The project enhances urban safety and disaster preparedness, providing a critical tool for first responders and city planners. It strengthens community resilience, reduces risk during emergencies, and contributes to the development of smart, responsive urban systems. Moreover, its inclusive design ensures accessibility for people with disabilities and language barriers.

### SDG 11 Contribution:

Aligned with SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, the project supports the creation of safe, resilient, and sustainable urban environments. By improving disaster response infrastructure and enabling technology-assisted evacuation planning, it contributes directly to Target 11.5 - reducing the impact of disasters on human lives and infrastructure.



## Heybeliada Photography Trip

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The “Heybeliada Photography Trip,” organized by the Biruni University Photography Community, reflects the university’s sustainability and social impact vision by promoting cultural heritage preservation and community awareness. This initiative provides a concrete contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.4, which focuses on protecting cultural and natural heritage—since documenting the environment through photography helps highlight the value of heritage and encourages conservation efforts.

Aligned with the university’s mission to cultivate students not only with technical skills but also as active agents of social impact, the trip maximized student engagement by offering experiential learning opportunities in a real-world setting. The event’s inclusive design, encouraging participation from individuals with varying ability levels, reinforced Biruni University’s commitment to social equity and accessible community activities for all.

## “Let Young People Take a Role in University Life” - International Student Community (BIRULUS)

The event titled “Let Young People Take a Role in University Life,” organized by the Biruni University International Student Community (BIRULUS), highlighted the social responsibility and leadership roles of international students, advancing the institution’s commitment to social impact and inclusivity on an academic platform.

This initiative significantly supported SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by promoting cultural diversity and social cohesion, as sustainable and resilient cities require the active participation of all residents—including international students and individuals with special needs.

By presenting models of how international students contribute to the community, the event enhanced community awareness both inside and outside the university, reinforcing Biruni University’s vision of cultivating individuals equipped with global citizenship values. The initiative also provided a valuable model of how inclusive community structures can be built in multicultural environments.



## Düzce University 5th International Sustainable Tourism Congress



The participation of a Biruni University academic staff member as a Scientific Committee Member at the Düzce University 5th International Sustainable Tourism Congress demonstrates the institution's commitment to sustainability and social impact at the academic operations level.

This involvement indirectly yet strongly supports SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.4, which emphasizes cultural and natural heritage protection—and contributes to discussions on the environmental and socio-economic impacts of tourism on local communities.

Biruni University's academic representation at such international platforms reinforces experiential learning for students by providing expert role models and supports the development of inclusive and responsible tourism policies that consider the needs of individuals with special requirements.

## **GADER (Association of Professionals Working in Developmental Fields)**

Biruni University's participation in the GADER General Assembly and its institutional engagement with the association operationalize the university's commitment to social impact and sustainability within the fields of urban governance and community development.

This collaboration contributes critically to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—especially Target 11.3, which focuses on inclusive and participatory urban planning and management.

Engagement with a civil society organization like GADER enhances community awareness of social needs and fosters students' understanding of civic participation mechanisms through experiential learning. The inclusivity-oriented partnership supports the integration of disadvantaged and special-needs groups into urban decision-making processes, reinforcing Biruni University's commitment to building a more just, resilient, and sustainable society.



## Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University - Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Advisory Board



The participation of a Biruni University academic staff member in the Advisory Board Meeting of the Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts at Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University demonstrates the institution's social impact and sustainability vision in operational areas of educational quality and cultural heritage preservation.

This collaboration supports SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, particularly Target 11.4, which emphasizes strengthening efforts to protect the world's cultural and natural heritage.

The professional engagement contributes to raising community awareness regarding national educational standards and labor market alignment, while also providing students with experiential learning opportunities across sectors. The initiative aims to generate social impact by contributing to the preservation of local culinary heritage and supporting inclusive education and employment opportunities for all, including individuals with special needs.

## Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University - Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts Advisory Board Meeting

The participation of a Biruni University academic staff member in the Advisory Board Meeting of the Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts at Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University reflects the institution's strategic integration of social impact and sustainability within the operational domains of education and cultural heritage preservation.

This institutional collaboration provides a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities-particularly Target 11.4, which seeks to strengthen efforts to safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

The professional engagement in gastronomy and local culinary arts enhances community awareness regarding the preservation of region-specific cultural heritage and integrates experiential learning with sectoral needs. Biruni University's active participation in such platforms supports the development of inclusive education and employment policies that encompass individuals with special needs, thereby contributing to the formation of culturally rich and sustainable local communities.



## 1 Book 1 Film Event



Organized entirely free of charge by Biruni University's Social Impact Society (USET) for disadvantaged individuals with special needs, the "1 Book 1 Film" event is a significant institutional step that embodies the university's sustainability and social impact mission. This activity directly serves UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; specifically, Target 11.7 aims to provide inclusive, accessible green and public spaces for all, thus ensuring equal participation in urban life. In line with the university's vision, such experiential learning projects encourage active student participation, cultivate deep community awareness, and offer a genuine model of inclusion by focusing on reducing barriers to cultural engagement. This initiative demonstrates that Biruni University is not only an educational institution, but also an active stakeholder contributing to a resilient and equitable sustainable future for society's most vulnerable groups.

## Film Screening

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The “Film Screening” organized free of charge by Biruni University’s Cinema Society for disadvantaged individuals with special needs is a critical community service model that reflects the institution’s core values of inclusion, sustainability, and social impact. This initiative is directly linked to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities (Target 11.7), which focuses on equity and safety in access to cultural resources in urban areas, and it concretizes the commitment to raise community awareness. Through such experiential learning opportunities, the university’s vision not only supports academic development but also strengthens active student engagement. In this way, students directly experience the importance of making cultural activities accessible to all and prepare to be part of future sustainable solutions. As a result, this film screening powerfully affirms Biruni University’s institutional commitment—within the social impact context—to fostering inclusive and resilient communities that enable the full and equal participation of disadvantaged groups in social life.



## Biruni University Chess Tournament



Organized by the Biruni University Chess Society, the “Biruni University Chess Tournament” is more than a sports competition; it is a strategic initiative that supports the university’s vision of social impact and inclusion. By bringing together participants from different backgrounds, age groups, and individuals with special needs, the tournament makes a meaningful contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, since a sustainable society rests on establishing equal opportunities for community awareness and social participation for all citizens. Through such experiential learning opportunities, Biruni University aims to maximize student engagement and strengthen participants’ critical thinking and strategic planning skills, while also reinforcing its mission to promote universal access to cultural and social activities. This socially impactful activity demonstrates the university’s determination to build an inclusive university–community model that strengthens community bonds and creates an environment where everyone feels safe and valued.

## Linocut Printing

Biruni University's Art and Design Society's "Linocut Printing" event is more than an art workshop; it is a catalyst that concretizes the university's vision of social impact and sustainability. By democratizing access to creative arts—especially encouraging the full and active participation of individuals with special needs—this inclusive initiative directly serves SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. While preserving traditional printmaking techniques, the workshop focuses on building a living, sustainable urban fabric that strengthens cross-community awareness and social resilience. Through such experiential learning activities, Biruni University aims to raise students not as passive participants but as active social impact producers who generate creative and practical solutions to social issues through art, thereby maximizing student engagement.



## Blow-Up Film Screening



The “Blow-Up Film Screening” by Biruni University’s Cinema Society is a symbol of the vision to universalize access to culture and the arts. Designed entirely free of charge and especially for individuals with special needs, this event clearly demonstrates the university’s leadership in social impact and its inclusive institutional culture. By eliminating inequalities in access to cultural activities and ensuring the equal participation of all segments of society in social life, the event provides a concrete, measurable contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. Biruni University sees these socially impactful activities as an experiential learning laboratory that raises students as active stakeholders with social responsibility rather than passive viewers. This approach maximizes student engagement and powerfully reaffirms the commitment to build a more resilient, socially integrated society focused on cultural cohesion.

## “Becoming a Nurse”

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Presented by Biruni University’s Nursing Society, the theatrical performance “Becoming a Nurse” represents the university’s interdisciplinary leadership within its social impact matrix. Offered entirely free of charge with a focus on individuals’ special needs, this cultural access is a strategic intervention toward SDG 11: Inclusive Public Experiences. The activity not only ensures the integration of disadvantaged groups into cultural life, but also aims to equip nursing students with an empathic extracurricular experiential learning simulation. By taking active roles on stage and behind the scenes (student engagement), students personally experience the human dimension of healthcare delivery and social barriers. Through this dual-impact mechanism, the university concretizes its commitment to eliminating cultural inequalities through the healing power of art and redefines its sustainability vision with a focus on inclusivity centered on public health.



## Open-Air Cinema Screening



The free “Open-Air Cinema Screening,” co-created with special-needs and disadvantaged groups by Biruni University’s Cinema Society, is living proof of repurposing campus spaces for social inclusion. Transforming the university garden into a micro-integration laboratory supported with refreshments offers a strategic response to SDG 11: Universal Access to Cultural and Recreational Facilities. By involving students (student engagement) in these community-oriented co-creation processes, Biruni University aims to elevate experiential learning from mere participation to active social architecture. Beyond removing inequalities in access to cultural events, this activity concretizes the commitment to building strong bonds that increase structural harmony and social capital among different community members, positioning the university as an active stakeholder in sustainable, resilient, and cohesive urbanization.

## Youth Movement Society - Art

The “Art Therapy” event organized by Biruni University’s Youth Movement Society with Assist. Prof. Dr. Meryem Bektaş is a noteworthy initiative that embodies the university’s sustainability and social impact vision by fostering psychological resilience and inclusion in urban life. By using art to alleviate individual psychological challenges, this activity directly contributes to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, particularly strengthening social resilience through the creation of safe and inclusive public spaces. Offering a rich experiential learning platform for emotional expression and processing, the workshop drew attention to mental health throughout the process and strengthened community awareness for all segments of society, including individuals with special needs. Supported by active student participation, this initiative affirms Biruni University’s commitment not only to academic achievement but also to public well-being and to building psychologically safer, more responsible cities.



## Theater Performance



Staged publicly in the university's conference hall by Biruni University's Theater Society, the play "İstasyon" ("Station") concretized the institution's sustainability and social impact vision by integrating cultural heritage preservation and inclusion principles with artistic expression in the urban sphere. Supporting community social and psychological health, this cultural event directly served SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—especially Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible and inclusive public spaces. The performance provided audiences with a shared experiential learning space, drew attention to social issues through the performing arts, and significantly strengthened community awareness by promoting access to cultural activities for individuals with special needs. Brought to life through student participation, this artistic initiative reinforces Biruni University's strong commitment to building cities that are not only academically advanced but also culturally rich, fair, and socially responsible.

## Film Watching

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The free “Film Watching” activity organized by Biruni University’s Cinema Society for disadvantaged groups is a powerful institutional action that realizes the university’s sustainability and social impact commitment by creating inclusion and equal opportunity in access to cultural activities. This strategic initiative made a meaningful contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible, safe, and inclusive public spaces—by democratizing cultural consumption. The event established an empathy-centered experiential learning space that encouraged the integration of disadvantaged community members, especially individuals with special needs, into artistic and social life, thereby strengthening social bonds in urban areas and raising community awareness. Supported by active student participation and reinforcing an experiential learning culture, this activity effectively demonstrates Biruni University’s vision of supporting a fair, accessible, and socially responsible urban environment not only in education but also in the cultural sphere.



## Watching the Film *Achtste-Groepers Huilen Niet* (Cool Kids Don't Cry)

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The free screening of *Cool Kids Don't Cry* organized by Biruni University's Cinema Society for disadvantaged groups combines the institution's sustainability philosophy with its commitment to generating social impact through inclusion and cultural access in urban spaces. This film event made a concrete contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible, safe, and inclusive public spaces—by ensuring equal participation in cultural activities. By facilitating the integration of disadvantaged communities, including individuals with special needs, into artistic and social life, the event strengthened community awareness and social solidarity in urban life. Implemented with student engagement, the activity provided students with an experiential learning opportunity focused on social responsibility and empathy, powerfully demonstrating Biruni University's support for an urban environment that is not only functional but also fair and accessible to all.

## Watercolor Workshop

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The “Watercolor Workshop” organized by Biruni University’s Youth Movement Society is a creative initiative that embodies the institution’s sustainability vision by generating social impact through the healing power of art and principles of inclusion. By providing participants with opportunities for self-expression and artistic production, the workshop contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible and inclusive public spaces—through increased cultural and artistic access. The event strengthened both individual and collective community awareness and supported the participation of all segments of society, including individuals with special needs, in artistic life. Implemented with high levels of student engagement, this activity reinforces Biruni University’s experiential learning culture that equips students with practical empathy and artistic expression skills and confirms the commitment to promoting cultural integration that enhances urban quality of life.



## 3 Dance Night

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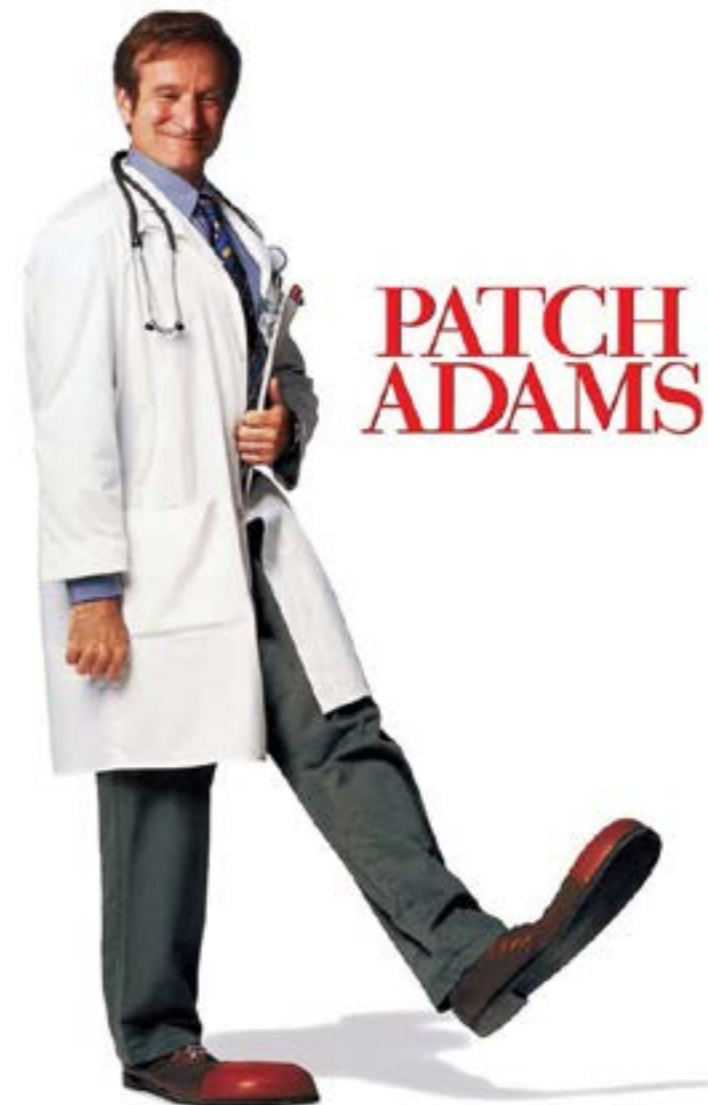


Organized by Biruni University's International Student Society, the "3 Dance Night" event strongly reflects the university's sustainability and social impact vision by carrying principles of cultural exchange and universal inclusion into the urban sphere. This multicultural gathering directly contributes to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.4 on safeguarding cultural heritage and Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible public spaces—through artistic expression and community integration. By offering participants opportunities to experience the movement languages of different cultures, the event created an intensive experiential learning platform; in this shared space, it deepened cultural sensitivity and community awareness across all layers of society, including individuals with special needs. Realized with high student engagement, this cultural activity confirms on a global scale Biruni University's determination to transform urban life into a platform that is not only functional but also culturally rich, fair, and integrative.

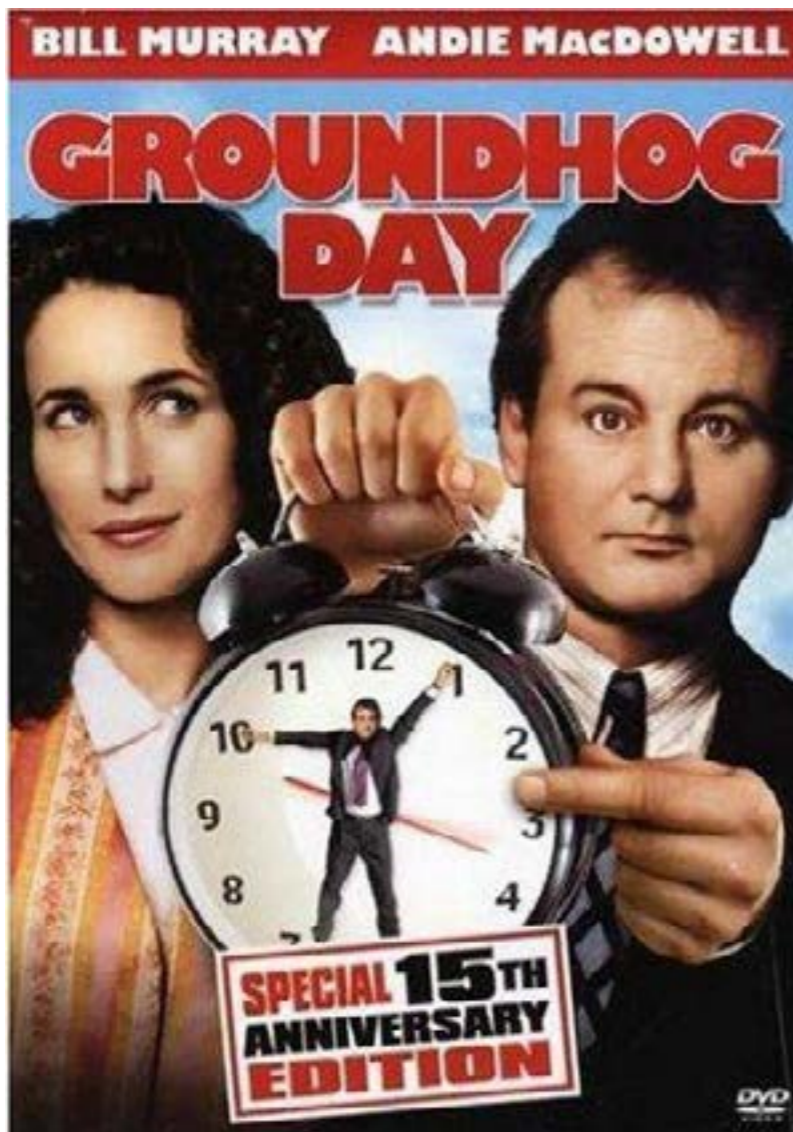
## 1 Book 1 Film Workshop: Patch Adams

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Open to the public and organized by Biruni University's USET Society, the "1 Book 1 Film Workshop: Patch Adams" is a powerful cultural platform that embodies the university's sustainability and social impact mission by increasing social consciousness through literature and cinema. This interdisciplinary event made a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on supporting universally accessible, safe, and inclusive urban life—by creating an environment of empathy and dialogue through cultural content. Using Patch Adams as a case study, the workshop offered participants an in-depth experiential learning opportunity on core human values and the philosophy of inclusion, maximizing community awareness by highlighting the stories of individuals with special needs and the challenges they face in urban life. Supported by strong student engagement, this initiative proves Biruni University's commitment to promoting social responsibility and a more just urban environment by using cultural tools beyond academic education.



## Groundhog Day Film Screening



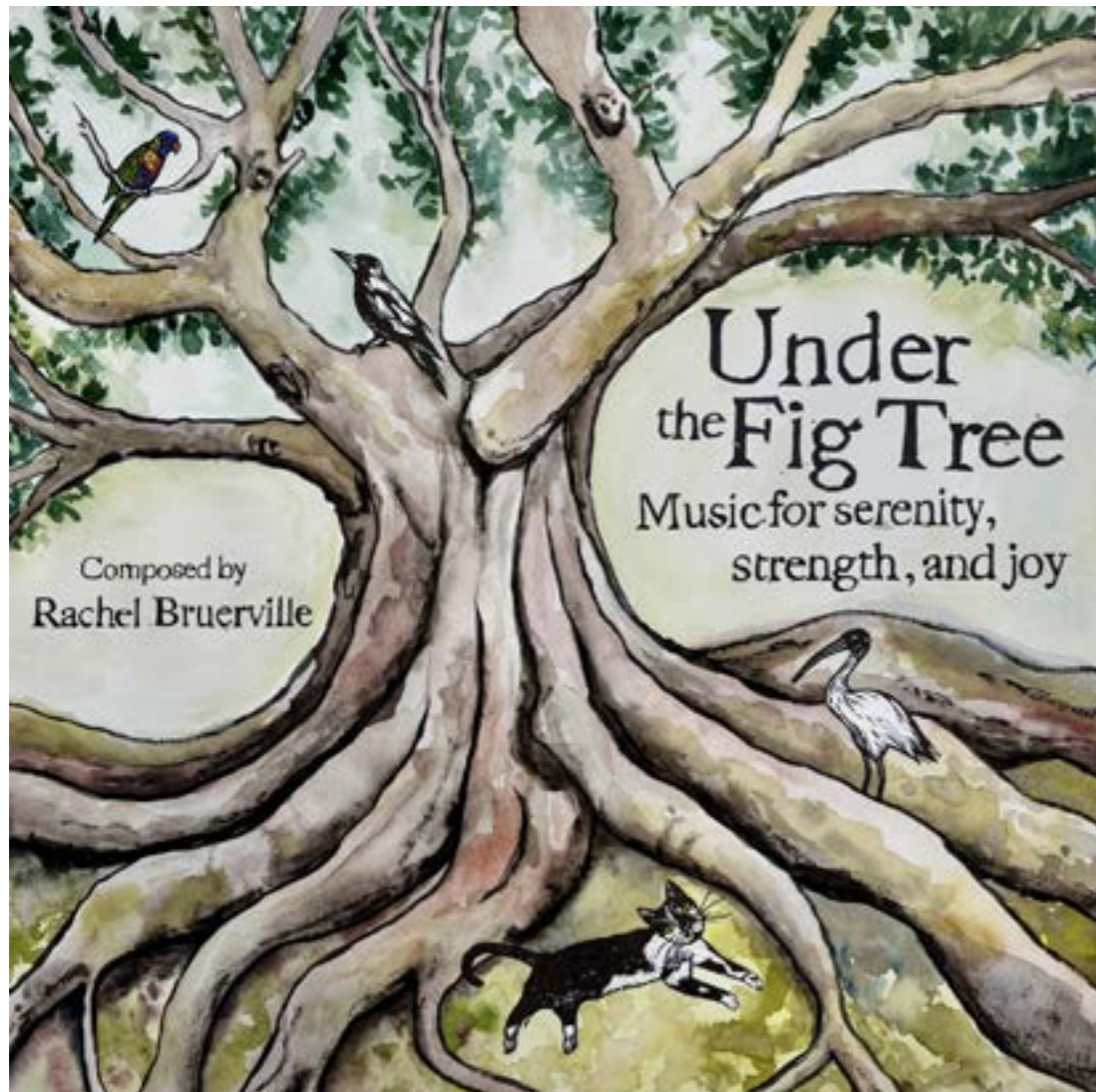
The “Groundhog Day” film screening organized by Biruni University’s Cinema Society merged the institution’s sustainability and social impact commitments with a philosophy of inclusion through a cinematic experience that questions patterns in urban life. Using the film’s cyclical narrative, the event emphasized the importance of individual responsibility toward one’s environment and community awareness, thereby contributing to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible and inclusive public spaces—by instilling critical thinking and social responsibility. The event created a shared cultural discussion platform for all participants, including individuals with special needs, and offered an intensive experiential learning environment in which students analyzed ethical and social issues. Supported by high student engagement, this initiative effectively confirms Biruni University’s vision of raising socially conscious individuals who recognize cyclical problems in urban life and actively seek solutions.

## Hayhak Clay Workshop

The “Hayhak Clay Workshop” organized by Biruni University’s Animal Rights Society is a distinctive activity that embodies the university’s sustainability philosophy by uniting artistic production with principles of environmental ethics to generate social impact. While offering students the opportunity to work with natural materials such as clay, the workshop aims to deepen awareness of animal rights and community consciousness through artistic expression. Emphasizing the importance of biodiversity and ethical living practices within the urban ecosystem, the event made a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities-particularly Target 11.4 on protecting cultural and natural heritage and promoting responsible tourism. Conducted with high student engagement, the workshop provided an intensive experiential learning environment that imparted practical artistic skills and encouraged reflection on environmental ethics. By promoting the participation of all community members-including individuals with special needs-in cultural and ethical discussion, this initiative proves Biruni University’s commitment to supporting sustainable urban life that is not only human-centered but also ethical and environmentally responsible, expanding the scope of inclusivity.



## English Musical (The Fig Tree)



Staged by Biruni University's ELT Society, the English musical "The Fig Tree" concretizes the university's sustainability vision by combining language skills and principles of cultural inclusion through the arts to generate social impact. This cultural performance made a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.4 on safeguarding cultural heritage and Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible public spaces—by offering an artistic experience that transcends language barriers. The musical created a hands-on experiential learning platform that gave students stage experience in a foreign language and, through this public event, strengthened community awareness among different cultural and linguistic groups. Implemented with high student engagement, this initiative promotes access to cultural activities for all segments of society, including individuals with special needs, and reinforces Biruni University's commitment to supporting a just, multilingual, and integrative cultural environment in urban life.

## Jewelry Design Workshop

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The “Jewelry Design Workshop” organized by Biruni University’s Art and Design Society is a creative platform that realizes the institution’s sustainability vision in the social impact sphere through applied artistic competence and the interpretation of cultural heritage. By enabling participants to design original jewelry by combining traditional and modern design principles, the event directly contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.4 on protecting cultural and natural heritage—through the continuation of crafts and artisanry. While creating an intensive experiential learning environment that supports participants’ creativity, the workshop also promoted the participation of all segments of society—including individuals with special needs—in artistic production, thereby strengthening community awareness and inclusion. Supported by high student engagement, this initiative demonstrates Biruni University’s determination to raise designers who are not only functional in urban life but also culturally rich, original, and socially responsible.



## Film Watching

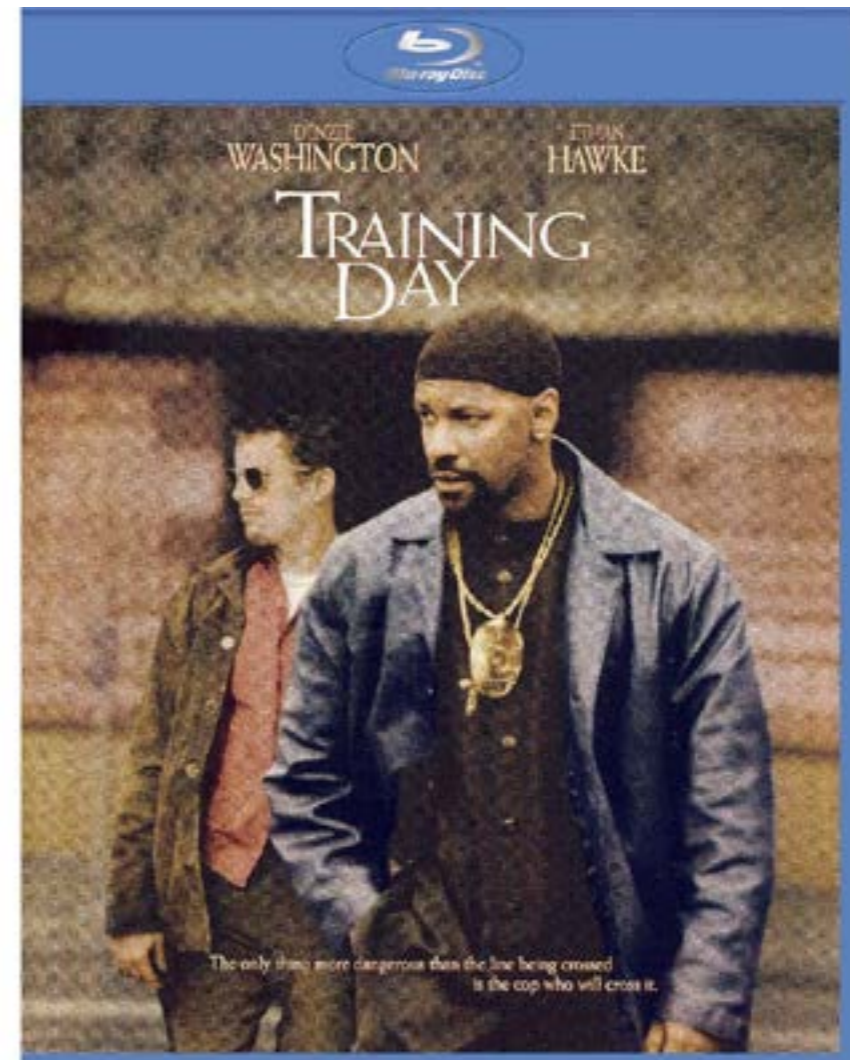
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The Film Watching event organized free of charge by Biruni University's Cinema Society for disadvantaged groups realizes the university's sustainability and social impact vision by implementing the principles of inclusion and equity in access to cultural activities. This strategic activity provided a meaningful contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible, safe, and inclusive public spaces—by democratizing cultural consumption. The event created an empathy-oriented experiential learning space that encouraged the integration of disadvantaged community members, including individuals with special needs, into artistic and social life. Supported by strong student engagement, this initiative turned the university campus into a hub of community awareness in urban life and powerfully reaffirmed Biruni University's determination to create an urban environment that is not only academic but also culturally and socially fair and accessible.

## 1 Film Workshop: The Training of Will

Organized by Biruni University's USET Society, the "1 Film Workshop: The Training of Will" combines the university's sustainability vision with its commitment to increasing individual and collective social impact awareness by using the art of cinema as a critical tool. The constructive discussion following the screening offered participants the opportunity to analyze in depth the relationship between individual will and social responsibility in urban life, providing a reflective contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.3 on encouraging participation in urban planning and strengthening local actions. The workshop created an intensive experiential learning environment in which participants discussed ethical dilemmas and experienced different perspectives, reinforcing community awareness and inclusion by embracing the views of all community members, including individuals with special needs. Supported by high student engagement, this initiative proves Biruni University's determination to raise individuals who not only possess academic competence but also develop critical and responsible approaches to urban issues.



## Visiting Istanbul Modern – Cultivating Culture



The “Visiting Istanbul Modern – Cultivating Culture” event organized by Biruni University’s Culture Society combines the institution’s sustainability philosophy with its commitment to generating social impact by encouraging access to cultural and artistic heritage in urban spaces. This cultural trip made a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.4 on protecting cultural and natural heritage and promoting responsible tourism—by highlighting the role of art in strengthening collective consciousness and urban identity. The museum visit provided participants with the opportunity to experience modern art on site, thus supporting the integration of all community members—including individuals with special needs—into cultural life through an intensive experiential learning environment. Implemented with high student engagement, this activity increased community awareness in the realms of artistic aesthetics and cultural consciousness and effectively certified Biruni University’s vision of raising responsible individuals who protect their cities, recognize their cultures, and reinforce inclusion through cultural access.

## Regional Championship

The activities carried out by the President of Biruni University's Martial Arts Society within the scope of the Regional Championship substantiate the university's sustainability vision in the social impact sphere through the power of sport in individual and social development. These sports activities and championship participation made a meaningful contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible, safe, and inclusive public spaces—by increasing healthy living and the inclusivity of sports culture in urban areas. The society president's participation and leadership offered students an intensive experiential learning opportunity focused on perseverance and discipline, while also strengthening community awareness that these sports can be accessible to everyone, including individuals with special needs. Supported by high student engagement, this initiative proves Biruni University's determination to promote an urban life that is not only academically successful but also physically and socially strong, responsible, and integrative.



## Day Trip to Uludağ

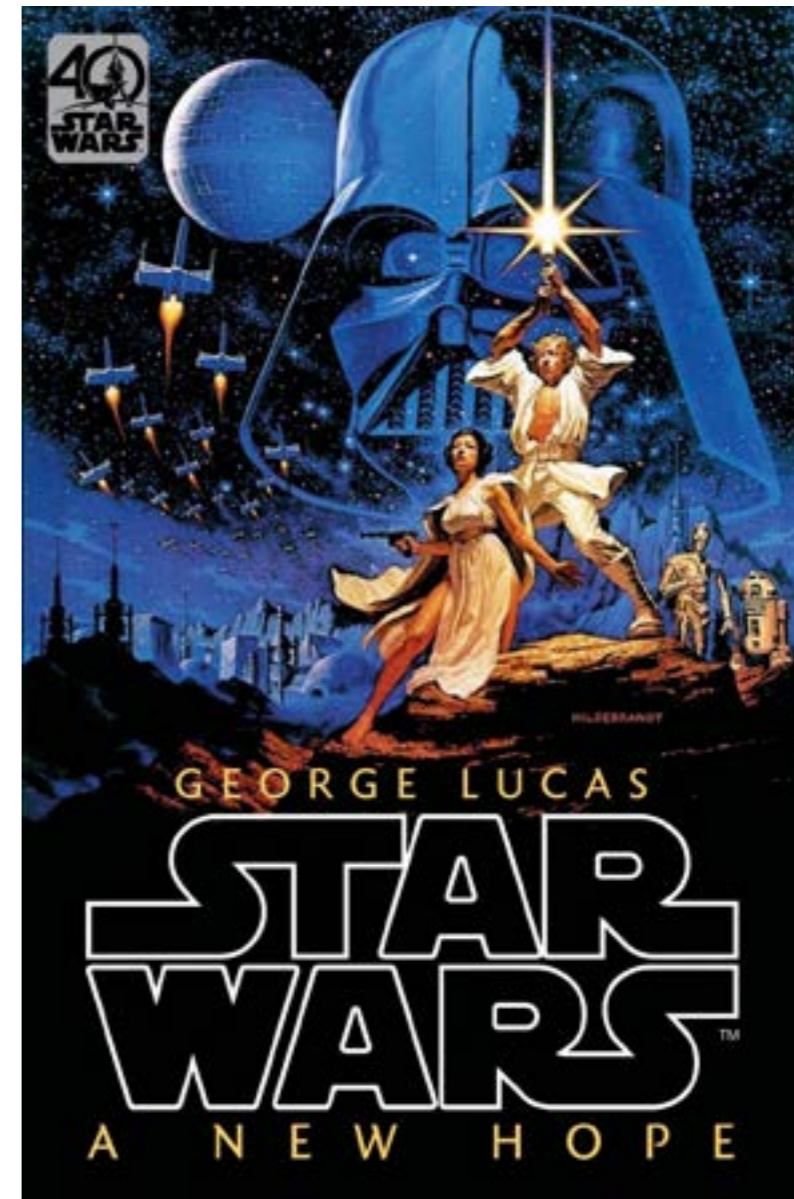
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The “Day Trip to Uludağ” organized by Biruni University’s Travel Society is an important field activity that concretizes the institution’s sustainability vision by integrating a commitment to social impact toward the protection of natural heritage. This nature trip made a direct contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.4 on protecting cultural and natural heritage and Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible public spaces—by increasing awareness of the natural environment away from urban density. Offering participants the opportunity to observe ecological systems and connect with nature, the trip created an intensive experiential learning platform that transforms theoretical knowledge into practical experience. Encouraging the socialization of all community members—including individuals with special needs—in accessible natural areas, this activity strengthened community awareness and inclusion. Supported by high student engagement, the initiative confirms Biruni University’s determination to raise individuals who are responsible and conscious not only of urban life but also of the natural heritage surrounding urban areas.

## Star Wars IV Movie Days

The “Star Wars IV Movie Days” event organized by Biruni University’s ELT Society embodies the institution’s sustainability vision by creating inclusion and social impact through the combination of popular culture and foreign-language education. Conducted in English, this cinema event made an important contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible and inclusive public spaces—by encouraging access to cultural content without language barriers. The film created an intensive experiential learning environment by offering participants the opportunity to practice language skills and discuss universal ethical and social structures through cinema. Supported by high student engagement, this initiative strengthened community awareness by facilitating the integration of all community members—including individuals with special needs—into artistic and linguistic activities. Through such cultural activities, Biruni University effectively affirms its mission to cultivate individuals in urban life who are not only functional but also multilingual, culturally accessible, and socially responsible.



## Comedy Play



Staged in the university's conference hall by Biruni University's Theater Society, the Comedy Play is a valuable cultural action that concretizes the institution's sustainability vision by creating social impact through the unifying power of art and the principle of inclusion. This artistic activity directly contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible, safe, and inclusive public spaces—by offering a shared cultural experience. Laughter and shared enjoyment strengthened psychological resilience and community awareness among different segments of society and created an accessible experiential learning environment for all participants, including individuals with special needs. Supported by strong student engagement, this initiative affirms Biruni University's determination—through the medium of theater—to transform urban life into a platform that is not only functional but also culturally rich, fair, and integrative.

## Visit to Validebağı Teachers' Nursing Home

The visit and gift-giving activity to Validebağı Teachers' Nursing Home organized by Biruni University's Mathematics Society is a meaningful initiative that embodies the university's sustainability vision by strengthening intergenerational solidarity through the commitments to inclusion and social impact. The visit made a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible, safe, and inclusive public spaces—by supporting the integration and well-being of the elderly population in social life. The emotional bond established between society members and nursing home residents provided students with an intensive experiential learning space focused on empathy and social responsibility, while also increasing community awareness for all age groups, including individuals with special needs. Implemented with high student engagement, this initiative proves Biruni University's determination to promote not only academic success but also an urban life that protects the dignity of the elderly and fosters a fair, socially integrated society.



## Earthquakes and the Reality of Earthquakes in Our Country - Training

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The training “Earthquakes and the Reality of Earthquakes in Our Country” conducted by Biruni University is a vital activity that embodies the institution’s sustainability and social impact vision through concrete action in urban safety and proactive disaster management. The training directly contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.b on disaster risk management and increasing the resilience of urban areas—through knowledge-based preparedness. By providing participants with critical practical information on earthquake formation, risk areas, emergency planning, and identifying safe living spaces, it created an intensive experiential learning platform that transforms theoretical awareness into action. Emphasizing inclusivity, the content centered the evacuation and safety of individuals with special needs in pre- and post-disaster scenarios, maximizing community awareness. Supported by high student engagement, this initiative strongly confirms Biruni University’s commitment to generating long-term social impact on collective resilience by raising individuals who are conscious, prepared, and assume responsibility for ensuring public safety in the face of disasters.

## Kastamonu Tourism and Hoteliers Association

The strategic alliance (Partnership) established by Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Zeynep ÖZER with the Kastamonu Tourism and Hoteliers Association (KASTOD) is an institutional action that transforms Biruni University's social impact commitment into local development capital. This collaboration positions the university as a pioneering investor under SDG 11: Cultural Resilience and Sustainable Cities—specifically Goal 11.4 on safeguarding local cultural heritage without commodification. The project functions not only as a mechanism to preserve Kastamonu's distinctive gastronomic identity but also as a living lab that trains university students (student engagement) through Solution-Oriented Field Studies (Experiential Learning) in the domain of Inclusion in Regional Tourism. This interactive model mandates the standardization of responsible practices across the tourism value chain so as to include individuals with special needs, and it evidences Biruni University's regional sustainability mission with a tangible and scalable cultural return on investment (ROI).



## Association of Tourism Academics



**Turizm  
Akademisyenleri  
Derneği**

The strategic alliance (Partnership) that Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Zeynep ÖZER has established at the institutional level with the Association of Tourism Academics (TURAK) positions Biruni University as a key actor in the high-level calibration of national tourism and gastronomy education, thereby advancing the university's social-impact commitment. This collaboration provides a vital knowledge-transfer mechanism for integrating a responsible and inclusive tourism ecology into national standards and curricula under SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities (especially Goal 11.4). The TURAK platform authorizes the university to contribute expert input to the setting of sectoral standards while also offering an interdisciplinary learning model that involves students (student engagement) in national policy-making simulations (experiential learning). The model aims to equip future tourism professionals with competency in accessibility norms and an inclusive service mindset for individuals with special needs. In this way, Biruni University reinforces its social-impact vision through a commitment to the ethical transformation of education quality at the national level, making a concrete contribution to building a fairer and more responsible ecosystem in the sector.

## Association of Gastronomy Academics

The strategic collaboration (Partnership) between Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Zeynep ÖZER from Biruni University's Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts and the Association of Gastronomy Academics (GADER) certifies the institution's preparedness for future risks and its organizational agility. This strong alliance, which plays a pivotal role in achieving SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities (especially Goal 11.4), offers an adaptation framework that safeguards the cultural sustainability of local cuisines nationwide. Through the GADER platform, the university leverages its scientific capital as a high-efficiency catalyst to rapidly transform ethical practices in the sector and curriculum standards. Thanks to this integrated structure, students (student engagement) move beyond acquiring purely theoretical knowledge and gain a dynamic field experience (experiential learning) in which they develop responses to the inclusivity challenges the gastronomy sector may face in the future. Leading inclusive and responsible practices, Biruni University, via this advanced participation channel, not only produces solutions to current issues but also clearly demonstrates that it is a visionary institution recalibrating cultural heritage and social equality to the needs of the future food ecosystem.



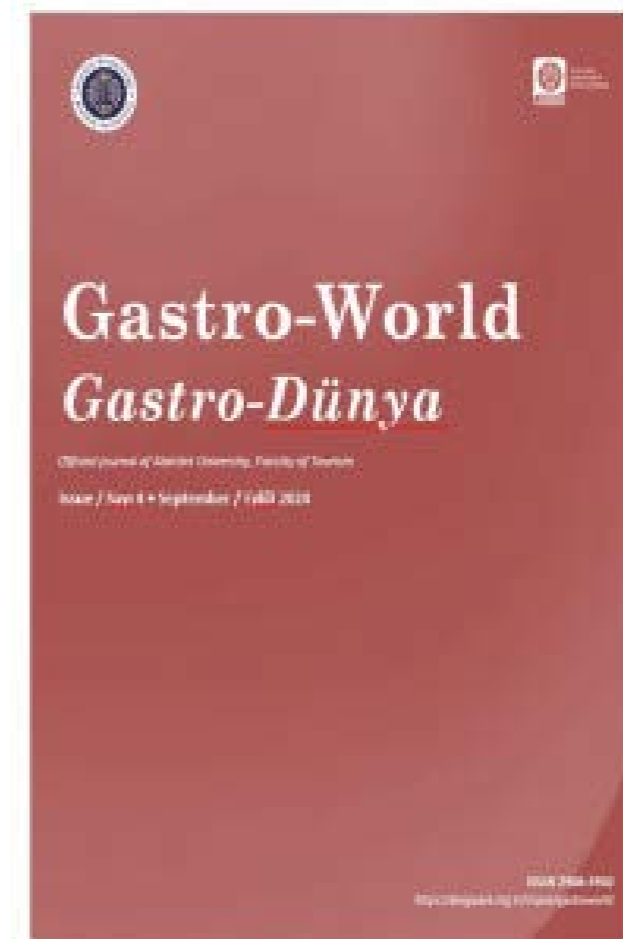
## 5th International Sustainable Tourism Congress



Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Zeynep ÖZER's participation from Biruni University's Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts in the 5th International Sustainable Tourism Congress showcases the institution's sustainability and social-impact vision at the level of international partnership (Partnership) and academic research. This scholarly engagement makes a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Goal 11.4 on protecting the world's cultural and natural heritage through responsible and inclusive tourism. The congress environment promotes global knowledge sharing aimed at disseminating sustainable practices in the fields of Gastronomy and Tourism, thereby increasing community awareness. This activity strengthens an experiential learning culture by exposing students to academic outputs at international standards, and it delivers social impact by fostering inclusive tourism and gastronomy solutions that also encompass individuals with special needs. Thus, Biruni University concretizes its commitment to supporting more resilient and sustainable urban life through global collaboration.

## Gastro-World

Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Zeynep ÖZER's involvement, at a corporate partnership (Partnership) level, in a prestigious international event such as Gastro-World concretizes Biruni University's vision for sustainability, social impact, and global academic collaboration on an international stage. This strategic academic engagement makes a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Goal 11.4 on protecting the world's cultural and natural heritage through responsible and inclusive practices. Through the Gastro-World platform, sustainable sourcing in food supply chains and the safeguarding of local culinary cultures against the pressures of globalization are encouraged, thereby raising community awareness both in academic circles and in the sector. This engagement strengthens an experiential learning culture by exposing students to academic outputs at international standards; it also generates strong social impact by producing academic outputs that develop accessibility- and inclusion-oriented service designs encompassing individuals with special needs.



## Journal of New Tourism Trends



The strategic partnership (Partnership) that Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Zeynep ÖZER from Biruni University's Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts has formed with an international academic publication such as the Journal of New Tourism Trends is an indicator of the university's commitment to channeling its intellectual capital toward the transformation of the global knowledge ecosystem. This scholarly engagement contributes critically not only to local development but also to SDG 11: Protection of Cultural Heritage and Responsible Tourism (Goal 11.4) by regulating academic knowledge according to international standards. The academic's role on the Editorial Board positions Biruni University as a global gatekeeper for ethics- and sustainability-focused innovations in tourism research. This role provides students (student engagement) with direct access to the latest research trends and publishing processes, integrating them into an international scientific experiential learning environment. Consequently, through this strategic positioning, the university advances the scientific infrastructure of inclusive tourism approaches that also encompass individuals with special needs and makes its social-impact vision an inseparable component of its global academic reputation.

## Journal of Travel and Hospitality Management

The strategic partnership (Partnership) that Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Zeynep ÖZER from Biruni University's Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts has established with the Journal of Travel and Hospitality Management consolidates the university's role as a knowledge integrator that directly transforms its intellectual output into industrial solutions. This scholarly engagement supports SDG 11: Protection of Cultural Heritage and Responsible Tourism (Goal 11.4) through the quality-assurance mechanisms of sector-oriented scholarly publishing. The academic's refereeing or advisory duty at the journal positions Biruni University as a vital checkpoint for the science-based standardization of sustainable practices in the tourism and hospitality sectors. This active role offers students (student engagement) direct contact with the most current research and innovation needs of the sector, fully integrating them into an applied scientific experiential learning process. Ultimately, through this strategic channel, the university strengthens the scientific basis of inclusive hotel management practices that also encompass individuals with special needs and defines its social-impact vision as a concrete and measurable contribution to the sector's responsible transformation.



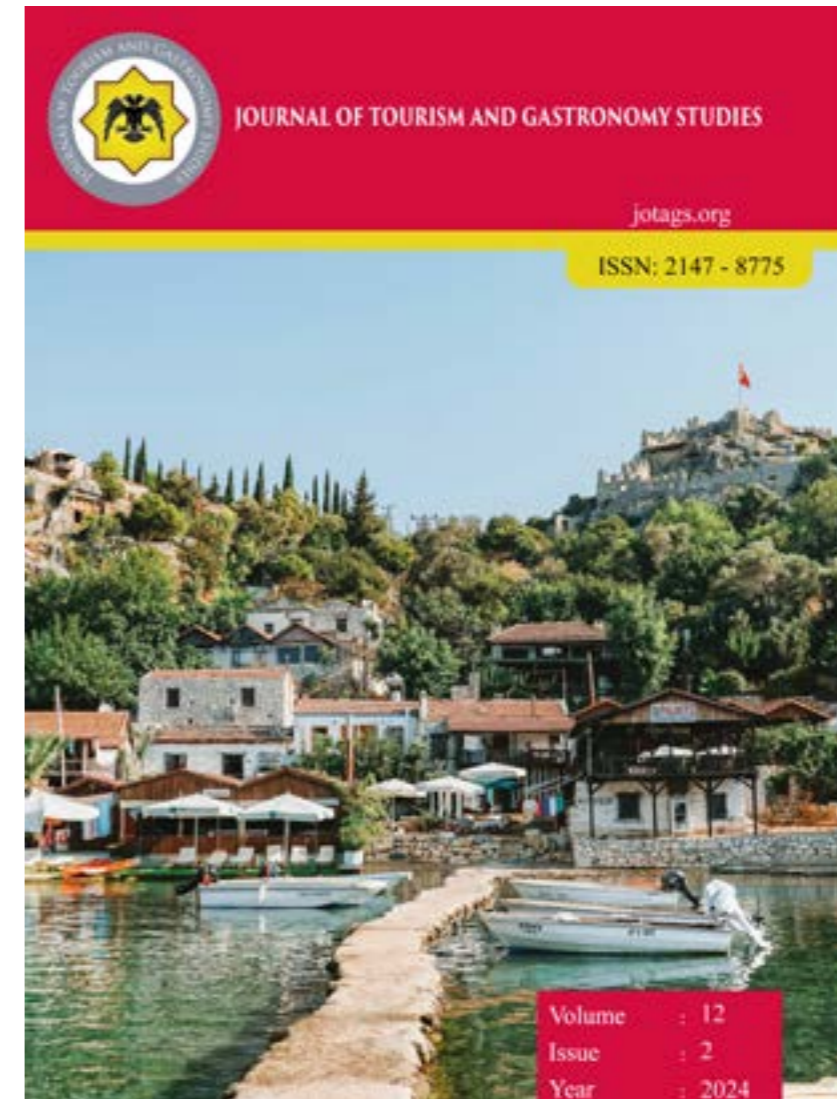
## International Journal of Turkic World Tourism Research



Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Zeynep ÖZER's institutional-level partnership (Partnership) with the International Journal of Turkic World Tourism Research concretizes the university's sustainability and social-impact vision in the protection of the Turkic World's cultural heritage and its support through tourism. This scholarly engagement makes a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—specifically the goals of protecting cultural heritage (Goal 11.4) and developing tourism responsibly. Through the academic's role at the journal, the sustainable and inclusive examination of Turkic World gastronomy and tourism practices is encouraged, thereby increasing community awareness both in academic environments and relevant sectors. This active participation provides students with experiential learning opportunities in an international and cultural context and delivers social impact by helping to develop the scientific infrastructure of inclusive tourism approaches that also encompass individuals with special needs.

## Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies

The strategic partnership (Partnership) that Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Zeynep ÖZER from Biruni University's Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts has formed with a nationally influential academic publication such as the Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies concretizes the university's leadership within the national impact matrix and the dissemination of scientific knowledge through interdisciplinary synergy. This scholarly engagement supports contributions to SDG 11: Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage (Goal 11.4) by ethically and methodologically calibrating national tourism and gastronomy research. The academic's refereeing and advisory position at the journal positions Biruni University as the national provider of sustainability-focused scientific standards in gastronomy and tourism research across Türkiye. This role fully integrates students (student engagement) into an interdisciplinary experiential learning process in which they actively participate in quality-control procedures of national scholarly publishing rather than passively observing current research trends. As a result, through this strategic channel, the university strengthens the scientific basis of inclusive solutions that also encompass individuals with special needs and seals its social-impact vision with a commitment to translating national scientific knowledge into practice.



## Anatolia: Journal of Tourism Research

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Assist. Prof. Dr. Gülsün DURAN's partnership (Partnership) at the institutional level with Anatolia: Journal of Tourism Research, a respected academic journal both nationally and internationally, concretizes the university's sustainability and social-impact vision in the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge. This scholarly contribution provides a critical boost to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Goal 11.4 on preserving cultural and natural heritage through inclusive and responsible tourism practices. Through the academic's refereeing or advisory role, the quality of research on the potential of Anatolian tourism for local development, sustainable practices, and social impact on local communities is elevated. While offering students experiential learning opportunities, this active participation also strengthens community awareness aimed at developing the scientific foundations of inclusive tourism approaches that encompass individuals with special needs.

## Journal of Tourismology

The strategic partnership (Partnership) between Assist. Prof. Dr. Gülsün DURAN of Biruni University's Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts and an academic publication with both national and global reach such as the Journal of Tourismology concretizes the university's sustainability vision as a bridge managing the multi-dimensional flow of scientific knowledge. This scholarly engagement contributes to SDG 11: Protection of Cultural Heritage and Responsible Tourism (Goal 11.4) by accelerating scientific quality in international and national tourism research. The academic's refereeing and advisory role at the journal positions Biruni University as a critical "Impact Accelerator" situated at the intersection of global and local scientific knowledge for innovative and inclusive practices in tourism science. This active role integrates students (student engagement) into a two-way experiential learning environment where they not only become familiar with current research trends but also actively participate in scientific adjudication processes at international standards. Ultimately, by strengthening the scientific foundations of inclusive tourism approaches that also encompass individuals with special needs, the university reinforces its social-impact commitment, proving itself to be a pioneering actor that aligns national practice with a global vision by increasing the production and quality of knowledge.



## Tourism and Recreation



Assist. Prof. Dr. Gülsün DURAN's institutional-level partnership (Partnership) with the journal *Tourism and Recreation* concretizes the university's sustainability and social-impact vision in the area of enhancing quality of life through recreation and tourism. This scholarly engagement makes a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Goal 11.7 on ensuring safe, accessible, and inclusive urban spaces for all. Through the academic's role at the journal, the publication of research on sustainable and inclusive practices in the recreation and tourism sectors is supported, thereby strengthening community awareness both in academia and in the industry. This role, which promotes active student participation (student engagement), familiarizes students with current research trends, reinforces an experiential learning culture, and provides strong social impact by helping to develop the scientific foundations of inclusive recreation and tourism approaches that encompass individuals with special needs.



## SDG RELATED COURSES

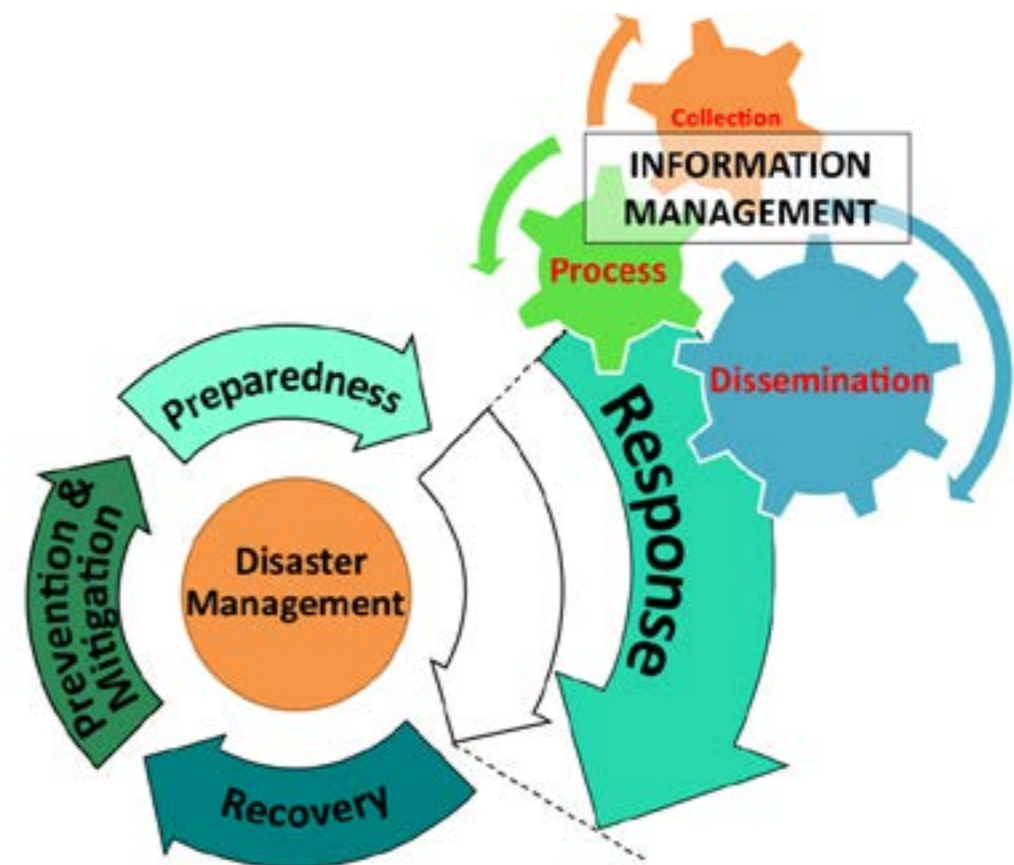
### Disaster Culture



The course “Disaster Culture,” offered by Biruni University, is one of the most critical reflections of the institution’s sustainability and social-impact vision within the teaching & learning domain. This compulsory or elective course directly serves the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities-particularly Target 11.b on reducing disaster risk and strengthening community resilience. The curriculum goes beyond theory to provide an experiential learning-focused approach that equips students with practical skills for preparedness before disasters, appropriate behavior during disasters, and recovery processes after disasters. This approach aims to raise community awareness on how to build an inclusive and safe social structure that encompasses not only all students but also individuals with special needs. By incorporating this course into the program, Biruni University demonstrates its commitment to making a long-term, sustainable contribution to overall societal resilience by educating individuals who are prepared, aware, and capable of creating social impact in the face of disasters.

## Basic Disaster Knowledge

The course “Basic Disaster Knowledge,” offered to students by Biruni University, constitutes a fundamental reflection of the institution’s sustainability and social-impact commitment within the teaching & learning field. This course supports SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities-especially Target 11.b on managing disaster risk and enhancing the resilience of urban areas. The curriculum includes experiential learning components that equip students with essential knowledge and skills regarding disaster types, risk-reduction strategies, and emergency response protocols. Focusing on inclusive approaches-including safety and evacuation plans for individuals with special needs as well as for all members of society-the course aims to increase community awareness. By offering this training as compulsory or elective, Biruni University ensures that all graduates become conscious individuals with strong social-impact potential in the face of disasters, thereby fulfilling its mission to make a long-term, sustainable contribution to overall community resilience.



## Music Education in Early Childhood



The course “Music Education in Early Childhood,” offered by Biruni University, is a key academic component that integrates the teaching & learning curriculum with the institution’s sustainability and social-impact vision. The course provides an indirect yet powerful contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities by supporting cultural participation and accessible public spaces for all—since expanding culture and arts education from the earliest ages is vital to building sustainable and inclusive societies. While aiming to support children’s cognitive, emotional, and social development through music education, the pedagogical approach reinforces the principle of inclusivity by integrating this education into the development of individuals with special needs. Through experiential learning, Biruni University students gain insight into the social sensitivities of early childhood, thus acquiring high levels of community awareness and social-impact potential as future educators and health professionals.

## Art Education in Early Childhood

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The course “Art Education in Early Childhood,” offered to students by Biruni University, represents a long-term commitment to the institution’s sustainability and social-impact vision in the teaching & learning arena. The course provides an indirect yet powerful contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; by expanding access to quality arts education from the ground up, it enhances cultural accessibility and strengthens community awareness, thereby laying the foundation for more sustainable and inclusive societies. The curriculum aims to develop artistic expression, problem-solving abilities, and cultural understanding in children, and elevates the principle of inclusivity to the academic level by focusing on adapting this education to the development of individuals with special needs. Through this program, Biruni University students gain experiential learning opportunities and are trained to become ethical and sensitive professionals equipped to use art as a tool for social impact in their future careers.



## Safe Rescue Operations

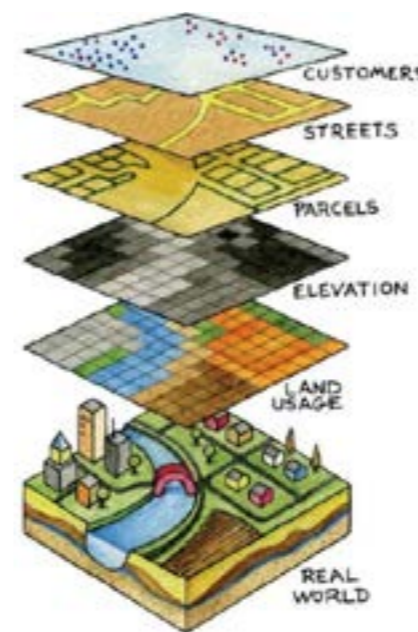
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Integrated into Biruni University’s teaching & learning curriculum, the course “Safe Rescue Operations” represents one of the institution’s most critical applications of its sustainability and social-impact vision in the field of public safety. This course directly serves SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.b on reducing disaster risk and enhancing the resilience of urban areas. The curriculum contains intensive experiential learning components that teach students core rescue techniques and emergency response protocols, enabling them to generate active social impact during crises. The training covers not only general rescue procedures but also inclusive approaches to the rescue and evacuation of individuals with special needs, aiming to maximize community awareness. This strategic step strongly affirms Biruni University’s commitment to making a long-term, sustainable contribution to overall societal resilience by training individuals who are prepared, aware, and responsible for ensuring public safety in the face of disasters.

## **Cartography and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**

Included in Biruni University’s teaching & learning curriculum, the course “Cartography and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)” is one of the most important technology- and spatial-planning-oriented components of the institution’s sustainability and social-impact vision. This course directly serves SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.b on reducing disaster risk and improving the management of urban areas. The curriculum features intensive experiential learning components that equip students to collect field data, conduct analyses, and build spatial models—thereby ensuring active student engagement. GIS technology also functions as a core tool in designing inclusive urban solutions—such as accessibility maps and safe evacuation routes for individuals with special needs—thus elevating the social-impact potential. This strategic course ensures that graduates become data-driven professionals, equipped with global-standard community awareness, who contribute to sustainable urban planning.



**GIS**  
**geographic  
 information  
 system**

## Firefighting and Fire Safety



The course “Firefighting and Fire Safety,” which Biruni University has included as a strategic necessity within its teaching & learning portfolio, is a fundamental institutional investment that renders the university’s sustainability vision concrete in the domain of mandatory urban resilience training. This course provides a direct and measurable response to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.b on disaster-risk management and strengthening urban resilience. At its core, the curriculum features intensive, practice-oriented, field-based experiential learning modules that provide students with vital competencies in fire prevention, basic firefighting principles, and emergency response. By centering the safety of all individuals—especially the inclusive safety protocols for evacuation and rescue of people with special needs—the training elevates community awareness from an everyday understanding to a standard of institutional sensitivity. Through this strategic curriculum, Biruni University goes beyond equipping students with theoretical knowledge, certifying its long-term commitment to training proactive “Architects of Societal Resilience” who are vigilant, prepared, and actively engaged in building overall community robustness against disasters.

## Urban Furniture

The course “Urban Furniture,” integrated into Biruni University’s teaching & learning framework, represents an applied design studio for the Zero-Barrier City Manifesto that reaches beyond campus walls. This curricular component responds directly to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on creating universally accessible, safe public spaces—through a vision of scientific aesthetics and inclusive engineering. The course provides a sustainable design experience (experiential learning) that teaches students to integrate not only aesthetics but also ergonomic imperatives and the environmental cost of material sustainability into the design of urban furniture. Student engagement brings the needs of individuals with special needs to the very start of the design process, serving the mission of graduating socially certified professionals who prioritize benefit/cost analyses for society in urban design decisions. Through this course, Biruni University delivers a lasting, intergenerational social impact by supporting the creation of living spaces that are not only functional and aesthetic but also fair, inclusive, and respectful to every user.



## Rescue Tools and Equipment



The course “Rescue Tools and Equipment,” added to Biruni University’s teaching & learning curriculum, reflects the technological and practical dimension of the institution’s sustainability and social-impact vision in disaster management. This course makes a critical contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.b on reducing disaster risk and preparing for urban resilience. The curriculum includes hands-on applications that provide high levels of experiential learning and student engagement, teaching students the technical features, safe operating procedures, and maintenance of current rescue tools. Focusing on how tools and equipment can be adapted for inclusive rescue operations for all community members—especially individuals with special needs—the training aims to raise community awareness. This strategic course demonstrates Biruni University’s determination to help build a prepared, sustainable social structure by educating individuals who possess technological competence and a strong sense of social impact.

## Culture and Health

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Strategically embedded as a requirement within Biruni University's teaching & learning program, the course "Culture and Health" functions as a Social Prescription Studio that rewrites the neglected cultural and social dimensions of healthcare. This interdisciplinary curriculum provides a strong, transformative contribution to SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.7 on supporting accessible, safe, and inclusive urban life—through the competence of Cultural Proficiency. By analyzing how cultural differences create barriers to health behaviors and access to services, the course offers intensive experiential-learning simulations that equip students with Critical Empathy and Applied Competence for patients from every cultural background, including individuals with special needs. This approach not only increases future health professionals' community awareness; it also elevates their service to a professional ethical standard that maximizes social-impact potential. With this strategic integration, Biruni University affirms its commitment to contributing to more equitable, culturally sensitive, and socially healing sustainable health systems by converting its curriculum into Social Benefit.



## Structural Safety and Project Knowledge



The course “Structural Safety and Project Knowledge,” included in Biruni University’s teaching & learning curriculum, is the institution’s core component for its sustainability and social-impact vision in building urban resilience and safe infrastructure. This course directly serves SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities—particularly Target 11.b on reducing disaster risk and constructing safe buildings. By teaching project-management principles, earthquake-resistant construction technologies, and structural safety standards, the curriculum enhances experiential learning competence and active student engagement. While focusing on reducing the social-impact risks arising from structural insecurity, the course also ensures that designed or reviewed projects meet accessibility and inclusivity standards for individuals with special needs. In this way, Biruni University guarantees that its graduates act with high community awareness in urban-planning processes and prioritize ethical, sustainable development.

## **Sustainable Mobility and Access Infrastructure**

Located in the heart of the city, Biruni University prioritises low-emission mobility and pedestrian accessibility within its single integrated campus. A fleet of electric shuttle buses connects the main campus, student dormitories, and Biruni Technopark, providing continuous, zero-emission transportation that serves more than 3 000 passengers per day. The route design reduces private-car dependency and traffic density in the surrounding district.

To support short-distance and personal mobility, Biruni promotes the use of electric scooters and bicycles, offering charging and parking docks at each site. Directional lanes and speed-safe corridors ensure smooth coexistence of pedestrians and light vehicles.

The entire campus applies ISO 21542-aligned accessibility standards—tactile paving, low-slope ramps, visual contrast markings, and step-free access to every building. Daytime internal car traffic is restricted to service and emergency vehicles, making the university a pedestrian-first environment that simultaneously enhances safety and well-being.



## Affordable Student Housing and Pedestrian Priority



Biruni University ensures that housing and mobility planning directly support equality of access to higher education. Student dormitories are located within a 5-minute walking distance from the main campus and are fully integrated into the same sustainability system as the university. The B-ACCESS scheme prioritises housing allocation for low-income and disabled students, offering partial fee waivers and accessible room design. Each dormitory includes wheelchair-accessible units, silent-study areas, and shared kitchens equipped for inclusive use.

Pedestrian movement is the dominant circulation mode on campus. All internal roads are closed to regular vehicle traffic during daytime, ensuring a safe, walkable, and low-noise environment. Clearly marked pedestrian routes, tactile direction lines, and shaded resting areas support universal access for students, staff, and visitors. Emergency and delivery vehicles use separate corridors outside of teaching hours. Annual student life surveys report a 4.6/5 satisfaction rate regarding accessibility and housing convenience.

## Key Indicators (2025 Targets)

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**≥ 30 %**  
B - A C C E S S  
housing priority.

**≥ 4.5 / 5**  
a v e r a g e  
a c c e s s i b i l i t y  
s a t i s f a c t i o n

**0**  
p e d e s t r i a n  
i n j u r y  
incidents reported annually.

## Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Campus Design (Post-2023 Development)

Biruni University's move to its new Zeytinburnu campus in 2023 marked a milestone in environmentally responsible higher-education infrastructure. The new complex was designed and constructed according to national green-building and energy-efficiency standards, replacing outdated facilities with an integrated urban learning environment that minimises ecological footprint while maximising accessibility and community value.

All buildings employ high-efficiency insulation, natural lighting systems, LED-based motion sensors, low-flow water fixtures, and smart ventilation controls that optimise energy performance year-round. The campus heating-cooling network is centrally monitored through an Energy Management System, allowing real-time data collection and progressive emission reduction. Since relocation, electricity use per m<sup>2</sup> decreased by 5.4 % and overall water consumption by 7 %.

The design follows universal-access principles (ISO 21542), ensuring step-free mobility, tactile surfaces, accessible laboratories, and elevators in every

block. More than 92 % of all interior areas are barrier-free and certified by the university's Occupational Safety and Accessibility Committee.

Green spaces constitute over 40 % of total campus area, with shaded pedestrian corridors, native vegetation, and recreational courtyards improving micro-climate and user wellbeing. Waste-segregation islands and recycling bins are positioned every 50 m, and all hazardous medical or laboratory waste is processed through licensed recovery partners in compliance with national environmental regulations.

The campus integrates seamlessly with its urban surroundings through easy access to metro and bus networks and a dedicated electric shuttle service linking the main gate, Technopark, and student residences. Collaboration with the Zeytinburnu Municipality continues on landscaping, waste management, and urban greening around the campus perimeter, ensuring that Biruni contributes not only to education but also to the sustainable renewal of its district.



## Key Indicators (2025 Targets)

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**100 %**

u n i v e r s i t y  
o p e r a t i o n s

in energy-efficient, newly built facilities.

**≥ 6 %**

a n n u a l i m p r o v e m e n t  
i n e l e c t r i c i t y a n d  
w a t e r - u s e  
e f f i c i e n c y

**≥ 90 %**

c o m p l i a n c e

with universal-access design across  
buildings.

**≥ 95 %**

w a s t e - s e g r e g a t i o n  
a n d r e c y c l i n g r a t e  
c a m p u s - w i d e .

## Projects to Preserve Intangible Cultural Heritage



Biruni University safeguards the intangible heritage of science, medicine, and education through the Ebu Reyhan el-Biruni Museum and its surrounding learning ecosystem. The museum functions as both an academic archive and a public cultural venue, curating artefacts that trace the evolution of healing, anatomy, and innovation across Anatolia and the Islamic Golden Age. Its permanent and rotating exhibitions are designed by interdisciplinary academic teams, linking historical discovery to modern biomedical research.

Beyond curation, the museum hosts public lectures, guided tours, and teacher workshops that reinterpret Türkiye's scientific legacy for contemporary audiences. Students from the Faculties of Medicine, Pharmacy, and Education participate in heritage documentation projects, recording oral testimonies from senior academics and practitioners about the transformation of medical practice in Türkiye. These materials are integrated into digital collections accessible to both scholars and the public. The museum also partners with local schools and municipal cultural departments to develop educational modules on science history, ensuring that traditional knowledge, ethical values, and cross-civilisational contributions remain part of modern education. In this way, Biruni transforms scientific memory into a living, inclusive, and continuously evolving heritage.

## Art, Culture, and Social Inclusion

Biruni University plays an active role in Istanbul's cultural landscape, using the arts as a bridge between science, empathy, and community wellbeing. Each year, the Science & Art Festival transforms the Zeytinburnu campus into an open cultural arena featuring exhibitions, live performances, and interactive installations co-created by students and local residents. The Biruni Voices Choir performs at hospitals, schools, and district cultural centres, using music as a form of social connection and healing. Student theatre groups stage short plays exploring themes such as empathy in healthcare, women's empowerment, and neurodiversity—merging art with scientific understanding.

All events are free, multilingual, and fully accessible, equipped with step-free seating, ramps, and sign-language interpretation. The university provides transport support for participants with disabilities and invites NGOs, refugee associations, and local schools to take part, ensuring representation from all segments of society. Participation exceeds 2 000 attendees annually, reflecting the community's growing engagement with Biruni's inclusive cultural agenda. Through these programmes, the university reinforces social cohesion, lifelong learning, and cultural democratization, positioning art not as an extracurricular activity but as a vital component of sustainable, human-centred education.



## Public Access and Cultural Heritage



Biruni University's Zeytinburnu campus functions as an open civic space where science, culture, and education intersect. The Ebu Reyhan el-Biruni Museum, located inside the main campus, is publicly accessible without charge and showcases historical medical and scientific instruments, anatomical models, and rare publications reflecting Türkiye's scientific heritage. The museum regularly hosts guided visits for local schools, teacher groups, and families, with more than 5 000 community visitors annually. All exhibition areas follow universal-design principles—step-free access, tactile surfaces, wide corridors, and multilingual signage (Turkish – English – Arabic).

The Central Library extends community access through a guest-reader membership that allows external users—teachers, NGOs, independent learners—to consult materials and use study spaces. In 2024, approximately 1 800 public visitors attended library events on academic writing and digital research. The library's digital catalogue offers open access to theses, research summaries, and student journals, supporting the diffusion of knowledge beyond campus boundaries.

Biruni enriches Istanbul's cultural life through the Science & Art Festival, the Biruni Voices Choir, and public theatre and short-film performances led by health and education students. These events bring together university members and citizens, reinforcing cultural participation and social cohesion in line with SDG 11.4.

## Community Engagement and Urban Partnerships

Biruni University works closely with the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Zeytinburnu Municipality, and partner NGOs to align academic expertise with local urban priorities. Through the Biruni–Zeytinburnu Urban Dialogue Series, academics, planners, and local citizens meet twice yearly to co-develop strategies on pedestrian safety, public health, and climate adaptation.

Collaborative actions include shared data collection for accessible public transport mapping, training sessions on inclusive design for municipal staff, and community awareness campaigns on waste reduction and sustainable commuting. Biruni students participate as field volunteers, integrating service learning with civic responsibility.

The university also provides technical input for local urban resilience plans, particularly regarding the retrofitting of education buildings for disaster preparedness. Its School Outreach Programme offers workshops on environmental awareness for children from public schools in the district. These partnerships demonstrate how Biruni University acts as a living laboratory for sustainable cities, turning education into tangible improvements in community well-being and municipal capacity.



## Key Indicators (2025 Targets)

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**≥ 2**

municipal  
collaboration  
projects per  
year.

**≥ 500**

participant  
annually in  
community  
sustainability  
events.

**≥ 90 %**

completion  
rate

accessibility training for local partners.