

The University Endowment and the Genocide in Gaza

Members of the TAHRIR Coalition

Last updated January 31, 2024

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Introduction

Our university, like many others in this country, controls unfathomable amounts of wealth while denying its own employees a living wage. The primary vault for this wealth is the University Endowment Fund, worth \$17.9 billion at the time of writing, through which over 9,000 separate funds and donations for different purposes are pooled and then invested. Although UM's public status is supposed to mean democratic control, private interests have hijacked this public status to use as a shield against taxes, enabling them to pursue risky investment strategies.

Information is power, and information about the university's financial interests is no different. The Administration keeps most of this secret, including how investment decisions are made, the recipients of these investments, the returns from individual investments, and the ways that the returns from the endowment are put to use. The university has consolidated its control over this data by lobbying for exemptions from state transparency laws, removing processes that would have held them accountable to auditors, and repeatedly denying FOIA requests that our campaign and others have filed. This is a key part of the Administration's overall strategy of denying power to the students and workers who make the university function.

This document is part of an effort to contest this power. Students and graduate workers from the TAHRIR Coalition have used several different methods to obtain information on the university endowment that we present in this document. What we've found is truly horrifying — an insidious web of connections to weapons makers like Airobotics which produced the “Iron Drone,” deployed by Israel in Gaza; multiple satellite and AI companies producing surveillance and navigation technology for the Israel Occupation Force (IOF); and an Israeli prisons company producing ankle monitors and other surveillance tech that contracts with entities across the globe, including the Michigan Department of Corrections through an \$18M contract. **The University is providing the funds for violence around the world, often against the families and communities of its own students.**

At a glance, this guide is meant to explore and rebel against the following trends embodied in our endowment:

- UM has waged and won many battles against its students, creating a wall of secrecy around the endowment.
- UM has increasingly prioritized “nonmarketable alternative investments,” or investments into venture capital, private equity, real estate, and natural resources. These often mean investing into funds that act as middlemen who go and invest UM's money, obscuring how UM's endowment is truly used.
- Many of the connections to the Israeli apartheid state operate through the tech industry and its army of venture capitalists.
- Even if we were to set our moral concerns aside, Israel is a bad investment.

We hope you read this document thoroughly and join us in our struggle to sever the university endowment's ties to the genocide in Gaza and the occupation of Palestine, the prison-industrial complex in this country, and the US's imperial regime across the globe.

Please do not circulate this document beyond allies.

The politics and history of UM's endowment

The University of Michigan is seen as a public university, but it is first and foremost an investment firm.

UM's \$17.9B endowment dwarfs the costs of its academic operations, which in 2024 were [budgeted](#) at roughly \$5.4B.¹ In 2022, Santa Ono [made headlines](#) when he accepted a near-million-dollar salary as president of UM—but between salary and additional compensation, Erik Lundberg was [making twice that](#) as UM's Chief Investment Officer (CIO) back in 2016. [Like Harvard and other elite universities](#), UM has become a hedge fund with a school (and a hospital system) attached.

University administrators often talk about how the endowment supports academics, because a small percentage of annual investment earnings are put toward academic expenses.² But in fact, it is the other way around: the university's academics support the endowment. In particular, academics provide the university's investment function with two crucial things:

1. **Insider information.** High finance relies on buying low and selling high. To do that, you need information that other people don't have. *Elite networks, such as those among UM graduates, provide effective pathways for private information.* These connections can also provide the trust needed to power through the large losses that are part of high-risk, high-reward investment strategies ([Eaton 2022](#), Chapter 4). For investors, universities provide vast, built-in intelligence networks.

In turn, the endowment provides UM decision-makers a passport into high finance's networks of power, enabling Regents and administrators to rub shoulders with elites who control vast amounts of wealth. Regent Denise Ilitch [sat](#) on the Skillman Foundation's investment committee when it was chaired by Lundberg. Regent Paul Brown is managing director of eLab Ventures along with Doug Neal, a board member of Akadeum Life Sciences; UM invested \$18M in Akadeum in 2021. eLab invested in AI company MemryX in 2019; UM has invested over \$19M in MemryX since then. Former Regent Andrea Fischer Newman was forced to [return](#) contributions to her campaign after reporters [revealed](#) that she helped approve UM investments in companies owned by campaign donors. For UM decision-makers, the endowment supports these networks just as much as the networks support the endowment.

2. **Tax exemptions.** High-finance investors use risky investment strategies that require constant analysis of markets to identify what to buy or sell, and when ([Swensen 2009](#), Chapter 4). This is known as "active management," as opposed to "passive management," where investors place money in assets over long periods of time and simply wait for the return. Taxes discourage active strategies because when assets

¹In fact, UM spends and makes billions more from Michigan Medicine than its academic campuses. In 2024, anticipated revenues for Michigan Medicine were \$7.8B, compared to \$5.6B for the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses combined ([University Budget Book FY24](#), 7). Last year, University of Michigan Health [acquired](#) Sparrow Health System to become "one of the state's largest health care systems, valued at \$7 billion with 11 hospitals and 43,820 employees."

² UM currently devotes 4.5% of its endowment returns to academics. In 1986, the rate was set at 5.5% of a 3-year moving average; Regents lowered this rate to 5% in 1995, and lowered again to 4.5% in 2010. In addition, in 2006, the averaging period was increased from 3 years to 7 years (which, if the endowment were growing, would tend to make the moving average lower than with a shorter averaging period; Castilla and Hodgeson 2017, pp29,44,51).

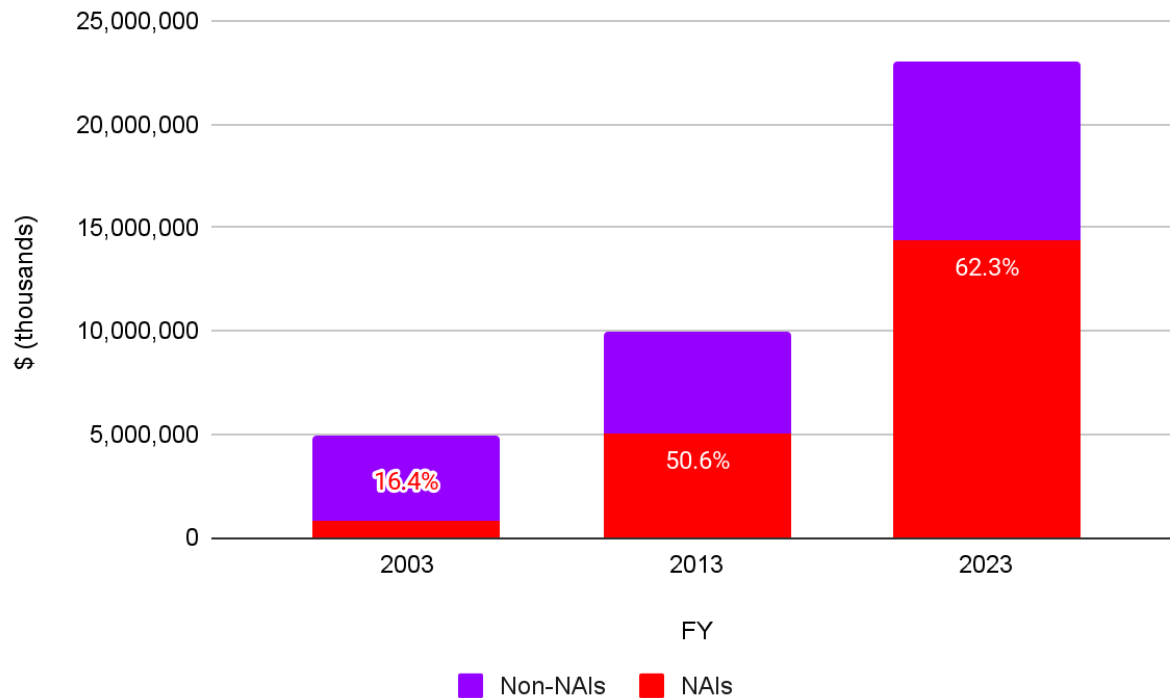
are sold, the seller must pay taxes on the realized returns. Taxes force investors to cut the rest of us in on their profits (which, of course, they could not make without us), which is part of why investment firms and wealthy individuals often move to [offshore tax havens](#). Universities, however, are tax exempt, meaning that *university endowments can essentially serve as domestic tax havens*.

Nonprofit and public universities' tax exemptions make them a perfect fit for *high-risk investment strategies*. Without taxes, universities can “rapidly trade without considering the potential tax consequences of their investment decisions” ([Tellus 2010](#), 6). One study found that without tax exemptions, elite universities would be much less likely to invest in riskier assets ([Geddes et al. 2016](#)). Instead, the tax exemptions give “perverse incentives for endowments to view market volatility as a revenue-generating opportunity rather than as a risk to be mitigated” (Tellus 2010, 13).

These two factors help explain why university endowments have gone from being primarily sources of income for education to being tax havens for risky speculation. Speculation occurs mainly through “nonmarketable alternative assets” (NAIs) like venture capital, private equity, real estate, and natural resources. These NAIs cannot be found on public markets and must be identified and assessed through private information. In the past, responsibly managing an endowment meant putting money in safe, stable investments like securities and bonds. Figure 1 shows how NAIs have moved from the margins to the center of UM’s investment strategy.³ In this approach, UM hires and oversees a swarm of investment firms, who then create separate “funds” that actually buy and sell assets (for an overview, see [Christophers 2023](#), Chapter 1).

³ UM’s increasing interest in risky investments casts doubt on the university’s explanation for its [sudden decision](#) to divest from Russia in 2022 “in light of increasing financial risks associated with such investments.”

Figure 1. Portion of UM's total investments invested in Nonmarketable Alternative Investments (NAIs)



Sources: [UM annual reports](#). Note that UM's financial reports only provide NAI/non-NAI breakdowns for total investments. UM's investments are mostly made through endowment, but the university also has separate investments to support operating, capital, and student loan activities, as well as some other investment types. For example, in FY2023, the chart shows UM's total investments of \$23B, of which endowment investments accounted for \$17.9B. NAIs are illiquid and therefore are likely concentrated in the endowment (see, for example, UM's financial statements for FY2023, p30, paragraph 2), meaning that the percentages above are likely underestimates. If the endowment held all NAIs, the percentages in the figure would be 22.6%, 57.9%, and 74.3% for FY2003, FY2013, and FY2023, respectively.

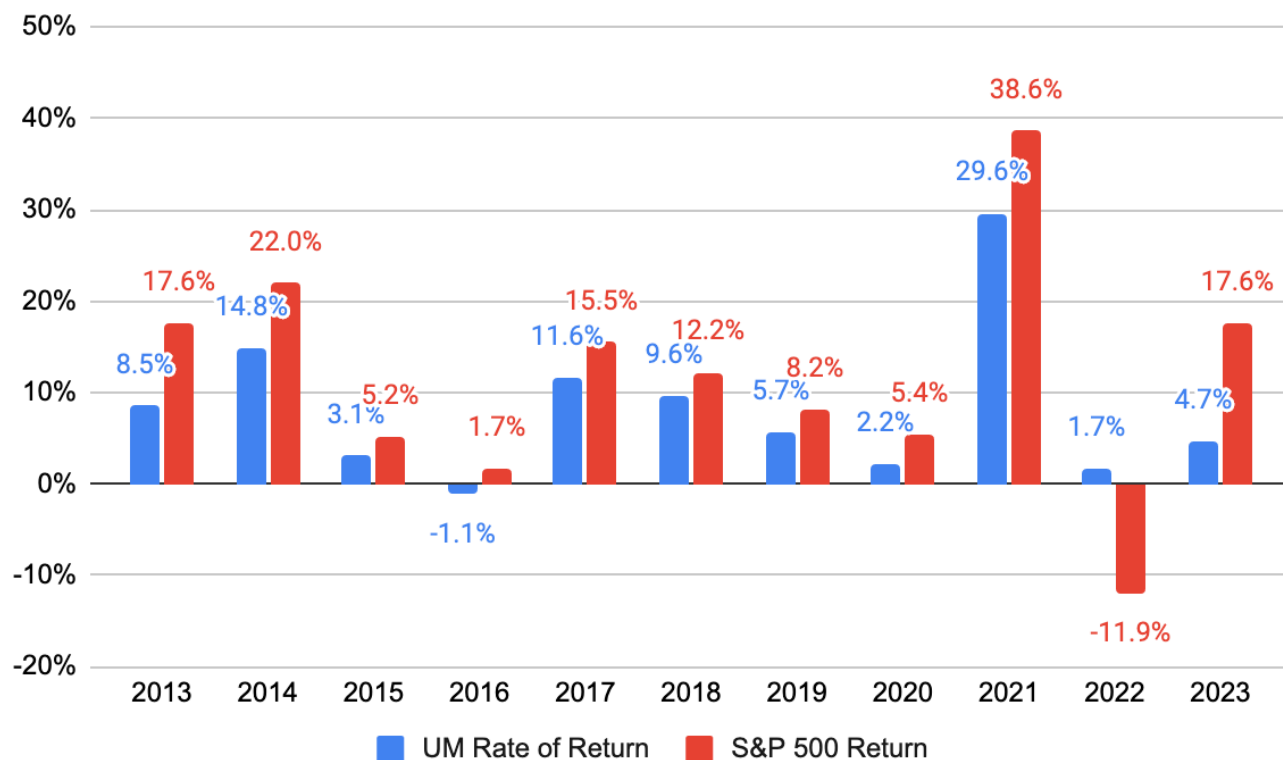
To support its increasingly risky investment strategy, UM has suppressed public disclosure laws. UM's public transparency requirements under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) were a threat to the insider information that is the lifeblood of high-risk investment. By 2002, venture capital firms were refusing to work with UM, threatening UM's new strategy. At the behest of CIO Lundberg, UM successfully lobbied the state for [FOIA exemptions](#) for investment managers' work with Michigan's public universities and colleges ([Castilla and Hodgeson 2017](#), 51; [House Fiscal Agency 2004](#)). As Lundberg later [told](#) the Free Press, "the reality is nobody

gives away their secrets.”⁴ This suppression of information ensures UM’s investments remain opaque and inaccessible to the public they are meant to serve.

However, UM’s high-risk investment strategy has underperformed relative to less risky investments. UM [regularly trumpets](#) its portfolio performance relative to other wealthy universities, which largely use the same risky strategies. However, UM’s rate of return was lower than the S&P 500 rate of return for every year from 2014 until 2021 (with 2022 as an exception; Figure 2). This is a strange outcome for a portfolio managed by a fully staffed Investment Office (paying salaries totaling [at least \\$5M](#)) plus the fees of the 280 investment firms with whom the Office contracts—which likely total in the hundreds of millions of dollars. (UM keeps the cost of these fees secret, but by comparison, Yale [paid fees](#) of about 1.9% of its [\\$25.6B](#) in 2015; the same percentage for UM would be \$340M for 2023.)

⁴ This built on earlier steps to increase the secrecy of UM’s finances. UM had initially kept a “master list” of “permissible stock investments” (Castilla and Hodgeson 2017, 1), but stopped doing this in 1986 (14). The Regents have not needed to approve all investment transactions since 1952 (15), and have moved increasingly toward the current regime of approving investment managers rather than actual investing (25). This was made possible by Michigan’s 1976 financial deregulation, which allowed the Regents to delegate investment decisions, including to third parties; UM hired its first investment consultant in November 1978 (20–21), just [eight months after](#) being forced to adopt the Sullivan Principles by the campus movement to divest from South Africa. Regents formalized this approach in 1985, voting to “oversee the management of the endowment funds through the establishment of investment goals and policy and the evaluation and selection of investment managers, rather than through such traditional means as the approval of individual investment transactions” (27).

Figure 2. UM investment vs S&P 500 rate of return



Source: Audited financial statements and finance.yahoo.com, as compiled by [Bunsis \(2023, p12\)](#) and updated by the authors to add 2013 and 2023.

If UM could, on average, make more money by passively investing in an off-the-shelf stock market index, this raises the crucial question: Who benefits when UM uses a secretive, high-risk investment strategy based on insider information?

The answer seems to be the wealthy and powerful. When the *Detroit Free Press* investigated UM's endowment in 2018, it [found](#) that "executives at some of the nation's top investment firms donated hundreds of millions of dollars to the University of Michigan while the university invested as much as \$4 billion in those companies' funds." Three alums tapped to advise UM on its investments had helped send \$400 million to their own companies, which "likely charged millions of dollars in fees and profit-sharing as a price for managing the university's money; exact figures remain secret." Investors sitting on UM's Investment Advisory Committee had created their own "Chief Investment Officer Endowment Fund" that was [paying](#) Lundberg \$2 million per year under terms that UM held secret. Lundberg had suppressed an internal audit expressing concern about Investment Office staff receiving luxury gifts from the investment firms they had hired. (Upon receiving a draft of the audit, Lundberg wrote to the auditor, "I suggest you consider lightening up on the style of the reports.")

UM's investments in Israel stem from Israel's position within global networks of power. Israel's apartheid regime has made it a [global leader](#) in profitable technologies of surveillance and violence, such as drones,

weapons, and spyware. Although Israel's high-tech sector has flagged since 2022, it has been "the engine of Israel's export growth" ([IMF 2023](#), 44), and "accounts for about 12% of all employment, 15% of GDP, half of exports and a quarter of personal income tax receipts" ([OECD 2023](#), 68). As detailed below, UM has invested in many companies that produce and profit from tools of oppression.

The end result is that UM is literally invested in Israel's "success"—that is, the mass murder and oppression of Palestinians. The profitability of UM's investment portfolio now depends in part on Israel's success in maintaining its apartheid regime. Were Israel to lose its hold on Palestine, UM's investments there could rapidly decline in value. Therefore, UM's investments not only provide capital for apartheid and genocide; they also give the university a powerful incentive to help prop up the Israeli regime.

Methods and data

Through the use of several online tools, we were able to obtain data on around 950 UM commitments to 927 funds. We were able to trace these funds to 280 fund managers, 48,751 companies, 68,552 deals, and some \$6.77 trillion in circulated capital over the past fifty years.

We also have data from a 2022 FOIA request filed by the campus ACLU chapter on the endowment in 2020 and 2021, and two additional FOIA requests for data from 2018 and 2016 that focus on public equity data specifically. FOIAs are currently our only way to determine the university's position within public equity investments.

We've uncovered some information from a [2022 UM audit](#), and in general rely on high-level documents the university has released publicly to inform our overall understanding of the endowment. We are also using the [AFSC's Investigate](#) tool, built on the [WhoProfits](#) database, and have used the [SEC Edgar Database](#) to try to uncover information as well.

For most deals, especially larger ones and deals in the world of venture capital, multiple investors participate in a single transaction. **Importantly, we do not know the specific amount that a given investor contributed in any of these multiple-investor deals, an artifact of our data and the practice of reporting these deal sizes.** We do have certainty in the amount UM has moved towards investors, except for cases where this amount is explicitly empty, as elaborated in the last section of this report; the issue is in determining the amount a fund has then invested into a company. Through qualitative research, we can sometimes alleviate the problem of uncertainty in a given investor's contribution, for example by knowing that an investor led the funding round or that the deal only involved a few investors. For buyouts, we've observed many cases where a single private equity firm completed the transaction on its own, and thus that single firm's contribution is equal to the value of the deal. For the most part, however, we can only say that an investor participated in a deal and how much that deal was worth.

Endowment overview

UM's endowment is a classic example of the [Endowment Model](#), also called the Swensen Model or the Yale Model after David Swensen, who managed the Yale endowment. In this model, for large endowments that dwarf the yearly operating budget of the entity it belongs to, money is invested into illiquid and often high-risk, high-return funds. This most often includes hedge funds, private equity, private real estate, and venture capital. This pattern poses problems for us for two reasons. Firstly, many of the companies the endowment can be traced to are startups or newer companies that have not been linked by researchers to the genocide (as opposed to canonized villains like Boeing or Lockheed Martin). Secondly, UM's commitments are most often not direct investments to companies but instead to funds which in turn invest in companies, which makes our work difficult because it increases by an order of magnitude the number of companies we have to investigate.

Table 1. Components of UM's total investments in FY2023

Investment type	\$ (thousands)
Cash equivalents, noncurrent	\$559,028
Equity securities	\$684,059
Fixed income securities	\$4,577,802
Commingled funds	\$3,118,279
Nonmarketable alternative investments	\$14,355,447
<i>Venture capital</i>	<i>\$4,852,381</i>
<i>Private equity</i>	<i>\$2,786,248</i>
<i>Absolute return</i>	<i>\$2,419,183</i>
<i>Real estate</i>	<i>\$1,875,120</i>
<i>Natural resources</i>	<i>\$2,422,515</i>
Other investments	\$3,910
Total	\$23,298,525

Source: [2023 annual report](#),

Overview of UM's implications in the ongoing genocide

This section first explains why we expect divestment to put real political pressure on Israel. Israel's economy is widely acknowledged to be unstable, meaning that it can only continue its genocidal policies if it is propped up by continued investment. If we can force a major investor (UM) to withdraw, we can help undermine investor confidence and deepen Israel's economic crisis. With this motivation in place, we then provide a summary of the UM endowment's connections with Israel, followed by a deep dive into connections with individual funds that the endowment contains.

Why is it important that UM divests from Israel?

Divesting from Israel is a powerful way to hold it accountable. The apartheid arrangement in Palestine that is known as “Israel” is inherently unstable, as its existence depends on depriving Palestinians of their rights. Israel has continually sought to eliminate this instability through the ethnic cleansing, displacement, and genocide of Palestinians. But Israel must maintain investors’ confidence that its plans will be successful. Like any market, investors are watching each others’ actions to decide on their own. Therefore, Israel’s task is to project confidence and keep investors calm; our job is to make investors nervous and, if possible, force a major investor (UM) to withdraw.



Value of the shekel relative to the dollar over the past 5 years. Vertical red lines show January 1, 2022 and October 7, 2023.

Propping up its economy is crucial for Israel because its fascist policies have led to significant financial instability. Israel’s “judicial reforms”—better described as an authoritarian power grab by the executive branch—created significant instability long before October 7. Figure 1 [shows](#) how the value of the shekel relative to the dollar has been falling since 2022. This trend accelerated after October 7, but has turned around since October 26.

Israel’s economic instability is no secret. A Bank of Israel risk assessment of the judicial reforms found that “the economy could be impacted through shocks characterized by increases in Israel’s risk premium, adverse impact to exports, and declines in domestic investment and private consumption” ([IMF 2023](#), 57). The IMF described the risks and uncertainty stemming from the reforms this way in June 2023:

While it is very difficult to project the impact of uncertainty on economic activity, continued uncertainty could significantly increase the price of risk in the economy, which could tighten financial conditions and ultimately slow consumption and investment. Among the specific channels through which investment could be affected is the relocation of high-tech firms which, to different degrees, conduct cross-border activities, rely on international financing, and employ skilled, highly internationally mobile workers. If a large enough number of firms in the sector relocated, Israel's strong economic growth potential could be jeopardized, as the stock of capital and labor market productivity could be permanently damaged. (12-13)

These fears had already begun to materialize before October 7. Israel's booming tech sector, "the engine of Israel's export growth" (IMF 2023, 44), accounting for "12% of all employment, 15% of GDP, half of exports and a quarter of personal income tax receipts" ([OECD 2023](#), 68), has begun to show signs of weakness. In July 2023, a [survey](#) found that most Israeli startups were considering or already taking steps to move investments and operations outside of Israel. A [Haaretz analysis](#) on 2/27/23 argued that there was major economic uncertainty due to Netanyahu's authoritarian moves:

There is one thing that isn't in doubt, including among the foreign bankers and speculators. As the changes to the legal system advance in the Knesset and after that, in government decisions, they will cast a huge shadow on the Israeli economy and the standard of living.

Hundreds of economists from Israel and around the world, hundreds of analysts at foreign banks and dozens more in Israeli financial institutions who normally are reserved about expressing views – economists at the Bank of Israel, the chief economist of the Finance Ministry and the columnists of the business papers in Israel and around the globe, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's friends such as Larry Summers and Martin Wolf – all can testify to this.

The genocide is deepening Israel's economic crisis. Reuters [reported](#) in November that Israel's Finance Ministry revised its estimate for GDP growth down to 1.6% from 3.4%—which itself was already lower than 2022's growth rate of 6.5%. The Bank of Israel soon [further downgraded](#) its GDP growth estimates downwards from its October forecast, writing that "the assessment regarding the State Budget for 2024 at this time is exposed to significant uncertainty with regard to the effect of the war and the government's decisions on how to deal with the military and civilian needs derived from it." Bloomberg [reported on 11/27](#) that the genocide "has ripped through the economy by paralyzing many businesses, jolting consumer demand and draining the labor market of workers." Propping up the shekel, and the Israeli economy in general, is crucial to maintain its apartheid regime.

This means that **even if we were to set moral concerns aside, Israel is a bad investment.** In 2022, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, UM [quickly divested](#) from Russia "in light of increasing financial risks associated with such investments." As described above, Israeli, international, and private financial institutions agree that Israel's economy faces significant uncertainty. Divestment from Israel is not just ethically necessary, it is responsible financial management.

What would UM divest from?

Foreign currency holdings and forwards

A significant chunk of UM's wealth is tied up in foreign currencies. Many of UM's investments are outside of the United States and bought and sold in foreign currencies and/or are based on assets valued in foreign currencies. As a result, UM owns foreign currencies and faces risks caused by fluctuations in currency exchange rates. Therefore, UM also invests in "forward foreign currency contracts" that lock in a particular exchange rate.⁵ From 2013 to 2023, UM's foreign currency holdings and forwards together accounted for an average of 13.6% of UM's total assets. This [has fluctuated substantially](#) over time: in 2023, the percentage was the lowest in the past decade at 8.1%; the highest was 19.8% in 2018.

UM's financial disclosures reveal that it held \$36.9M in Israeli shekel forwards in fiscal year 2022 ([2022 Complete Financial Statements](#), 71; [2022 audit](#), 64). Though we do not know the exact terms of these forwards, in general this means that UM was prepared to exchange \$36.9M in shekels at locked-in exchange rates. **This is the largest investment we have uncovered that connects the university to the ongoing genocide, as a direct connection between the UM endowment and the currency that supports the Israeli state.**

Assets like currency forwards help prop up the value of Israel's currency on the global market. A currency forward is a binding contract to exchange shekels and dollars. This can mean converting shekels for dollars or vice versa; either way, the currency forward guarantees that *someone* will have to hold shekels at the forward's maturity date. Currency forwards therefore increase demand for shekels, which will tend to raise the shekel's value relative to other currencies.

It is not clear whether UM held shekel derivatives like forwards in other fiscal years, or for how long those assets may have been a part of UM's endowment portfolio. UM only reports its holdings in a handful of currencies, lumping the rest into an "other" category that ranges in size from \$22 million to \$256 million. UM has also provided these currency-specific breakouts for forwards since 2017, and the "other" category for forwards has ranged *from roughly \$500 million (2020) to over \$1.5 billion (2018)*. Therefore, it is possible that UM has held substantial amounts of shekels or shekel forwards in years other than 2022.

Another way to get a sense of the scope of UM's Israel- or shekel-based investments is through "exposure limits" that UM sets for its financial managers. UM sets these for each country and currency: "Various investment managers acting for the University use forward foreign exchange contracts in risk-based transactions to carry out their portfolio strategies and are subject to agreements that provide minimum diversification and maximum

⁵ Forwards are distinct from futures in that 1) forwards don't typically require an up-front payment, whereas futures do; and 2) forwards are customizable and nonstandardized, and so are not traded on markets like futures (which are standardized). See Investopedia [here](#) and [here](#). Here is how UM describes its foreign currency investments: "The University participates in non-U.S. developed and emerging markets through commingled funds invested in non-U.S./global equities and absolute return strategies. Although all of these funds are reported in U.S. dollars, price changes of the underlying securities in local markets as well as changes to the value of local currencies relative to the U.S. dollar are embedded in investment returns. In addition, a portion of the University's equity securities and nonmarketable alternative investments are denominated in foreign currencies, which must be settled in local (non-U.S.) currencies" (2023 Annual Report, p64).

exposure limits by country and currency” (2023 annual report, p65). **If we could get the maximum exposure limits for Israel and/or the shekel, we would know roughly how much UM was willing to invest in Israel.**

Public equity investments

UM has held shares in many companies that BDS has named as complicit with Israel, or that are otherwise of interest to our movement. These investments are listed in the table below, with a brief note on their exact implications in the “status” column.

It is evident from these data that the university has a history of investing in public companies complicit with the genocide in Israel, as identified by the BDS Movement and the [Who Profits Research Center](#). These investments into public companies are direct ties between the university and parties aiding the ongoing genocide (compared to ties through intermediary funds, discussed further below). Of particular note are the university’s investments in Boeing and Lockheed Martin, giant defense contractors. The university held \$7.7M in Boeing in 2016 and \$169,000 in Lockheed Martin in 2018. Several other actors, like Barclays and several Hyundai-related companies are also listed in the table below. **Our coalition should pressure the university heavily into transparency of their recent public equity investments and divestment from these companies.**

It is important to note that the data in the table below are snapshots in specific points in time, and it is entirely possible that the university has moved away from many of these. We know that the university invested in Boeing in 2016 and Lockheed Martin in 2018, but we have no record of the university being invested in them in 2020 or in 2021. **Therefore, our coalition should demand the university publish recent records of its ties with public companies, and commit to a regular reporting schedule.** We need to know if the university still invests in Boeing and Lockheed Martin or if they have moved away from these companies entirely after 2016 and 2018.

The nature of public equity investments is also much more volatile than ties in private equity, as detailed below. The university can put their money in and out of companies as they see fit. **This means that the university may indeed invest in a company like Lockheed Martin in 2021, but was not at the time that this snapshot was taken on June 30th of that year. This is highly problematic for our campaign, and in general is reflective of a thorough anti-transparency campaign the university has waged on its workers and students.**

It is critical that the university release data current to this year as well, so that the university’s current extent of complicity can be understood.

Table 2: UM's public equity commitments implicated by research of the [Who Profits Research Center](#) and the [BDS Movement](#).

Company name	Total amount invested by UM, dollars at the time of valuation				Criteria for implication
	2016	2018	2020	2021	
Boeing	\$7,743,498				
Lockheed Martin		\$169,203			
Barclays	\$1,600,732	\$1,852,480	\$1,396,968		BDS Divestment and exclusion
Hyundai Elevator Co		\$404,787			BDS Divestment and exclusion
Hyundai Motor Co	\$668,177	\$530,376	\$488,632		BDS Divestment and exclusion, WhoProfits
AXA SA	\$1,199,645	\$1,030,563			BDS Consumer boycott
Caltex Australia		\$362,844			BDS Consumer boycott
Chevron	\$4,345,203		\$550,727		BDS Divestment and exclusion
McDonald's		\$2,029,344			BDS Organic Boycott
Alphabet Class A (Google)	\$3,004,073			\$68,370	BDS Pressure
Alphabet Class C (Google)	\$4,977,583	\$11,429,834	\$3,297,856		BDS Pressure
Amazon	\$5,224,026		\$4,868,522	\$61,922	BDS Pressure
Disney	\$4,553,129				BDS Pressure
Expedia				\$17,516	BDS Pressure
Teva		\$739,033			BDS Pressure
Airbnb				\$628,180	BDS Pressure, WhoProfits
Altice		\$3,157,774			WhoProfits
Cisco Systems Inc	\$6,496,161				WhoProfits
Cnh Industrial Nv	\$2,287,805	\$2,401,285			WhoProfits
Expedia Group Inc				\$17,516	WhoProfits
G4S PLC	\$1,609,161	\$1,801,893	\$1,208,784		WhoProfits
Hewlett Packard Enterprise Co	\$1,523,718				WhoProfits

Hitachi					
High-technologies Corp		\$347,860			WhoProfits
Hitachi LTD	\$3,012,214	\$2,640,183			WhoProfits
Microsoft Corp	\$6,569,994			\$95,085	WhoProfits
Mitsubishi Group					WhoProfits
<i>Mitsubishi Corp</i>	\$1,138,087	\$1,078,196			
<i>Mitsubishi Estate</i>	\$1,935,256	\$937,328			
<i>Mitsubishi Heavy Industries</i>	\$1,719,506	\$691,454			
<i>Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group</i>	\$725,689	\$354,963			
<i>Mitsubishi Logistics</i>	\$1,136,602	\$270,053			
Sony					WhoProfits
<i>Sony Corp</i>		\$501,125			
<i>Sony Financial Holdings Inc</i>		\$311,387			
Toyota					WhoProfits
<i>Toyota Motor Corp</i>	\$4,461,557	\$3,171,850			
<i>Toyota Industries Corp</i>	\$507,374	\$218,652			
Volkswagen Ag	\$1,631,724	\$1,725,912	\$1,371,442		WhoProfits

Data from FOIA requests and covers all public equity investments as taken on June 30th in 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2021. Note that companies associated with Hyundai here operate as legally separate but closely intertwined entities; the BDS movement targets HD HYundai specifically.

Ties through private equity, venture capital, and hedge funds

The endowment has several dozen ties to companies based in Israel through intermediary funds across private equity, venture capital, and hedge funds. 241 companies in defense are connected to \$5.7B in funding from the University of Michigan, and 333 companies in Israel are connected to \$6B in funding.

Table 3: Overview of university connections through intermediary funds with the genocide in Gaza.

	Companies in Israel	Companies in defense	All companies
Number of companies	333	241	48751
Number of deals made with UM and funders of these companies	367	362	959
Total amount of UM investments in these companies' funders (millions of dollars)	\$5,998	\$5,783	\$19,789
Total amount invested by funders into these companies (millions of dollars)	\$19,998	\$30,713	\$6,651,809
Number of funders	70	72	280
Number of deals	489	325	68166

Data may include expired or outdated investments.

Below is a table listing the top ten funds that UM invests with that contribute money to Israeli-based companies. These funds are listed in numerical order by how much money the university has invested.

Many of the companies here, like Sequoia Capital, are implicated by both the criteria of investing in defense and investing in Israeli companies. The criteria we used tend towards implicating larger funds that are focused specifically in venture capital; by virtue of being so gigantic and giving out money left and right, they also have more connections to the genocide. This is of course not to say at all that the connections described here are less serious, as the qualitative evidence on each company reveals. But it does mean that investigative research is needed to uncover important connections on smaller funds and companies, left out of this top-down view.

Table 4: Top funds by UM investment amount.

Fund manager	Total amount of implicated capital tracked by our team (millions)	Companies receiving investment tracked by our team	Amount UM invested in fund manager (millions)
Sequoia Capital	\$185,552.80	1400	\$390.86
Bain Capital	\$459,890.58	1156	\$357.00
Lime Rock Partners	\$8,239.82	141	\$344.33
TCV	\$76,153.17	408	\$300.00
Accel	\$98,070.96	1241	\$298.40
Roark Capital Group	\$32,853.62	142	\$280.00
Cresta Fund Management	\$392.05	15	\$280.00
Advent International	\$220,928.11	1092	\$275.00
Bain Capital Credit	\$26,240.40	197	\$250.00
Francisco Partners	\$59,348.96	423	\$245.00
Avenue Capital Group	\$16,035.75	99	\$230.00
Equity International	\$3,429.36	58	\$209.51
LBA Realty	\$19.15	6	\$205.00
Summa Equity	\$1,478.99	81	\$204.06
Patron Capital Advisers	\$5,357.60	100	\$202.24

Table 5: Top funds by amount of implicated funding to Israeli companies.

Fund manager	Total amount of implicated funding towards Israeli companies (millions)	Number of Israeli companies invested in	Total number of companies invested in	Amount UM invested in fund manager (millions)
CDH Investments	\$4,410.00	3	396	\$37.25
Battery Ventures	\$2,460.30	39	868	\$96.00
TPG (NAS: TPG)	\$2,142.73	12	1510	\$191.00
Sequoia Capital	\$1,980.52	30	1400	\$390.86
Kreos Capital	\$1,149.58	51	327	\$26.14
Permira	\$1,140.15	5	496	\$56.73
Francisco Partners	\$996.80	12	423	\$245.00
Lightspeed Venture Partners	\$893.50	11	829	\$0.00
Stripes	\$708.00	4	112	\$75.00
Blackstone (NYS: BX)	\$690.00	5	1913	\$60.00
Accel	\$565.36	20	1241	\$298.40
TA Associates Management	\$499.43	18	1322	\$26.00

CVC Capital Partners	\$400.00	1	953	\$112.14
General Catalyst	\$387.07	7	808	\$37.00
Silver Lake	\$332.88	4	819	\$110.00

Table 6: Top funds by amount of implicated funding to defense companies

Fund manager	Total amount of implicated funding towards defense companies (millions)	Number of defense companies invested in	Total number of companies invested in	Amount UM invested in fund manager (millions)
Blackstone (NYS: BX)	\$8,427.56	10	1913	\$60.00
Advent International	\$8,342.07	3	1092	\$275.00
8VC	\$3,366.32	8	364	\$165.00
General Catalyst	\$2,915.63	4	808	\$37.00
Andreessen Horowitz	\$2,781.71	8	1051	\$127.13
Bain Capital	\$2,701.42	5	1156	\$357.00
Matrix Partners China	\$2,242.48	9	629	\$92.34
Lightspeed Venture Partners	\$1,657.95	4	829	\$0.00
CVC Capital Partners	\$1,437.95	4	953	\$112.14
Sequoia Capital	\$1,339.16	3	1400	\$390.86
TPG (NAS: TPG)	\$1,261.00	3	1510	\$191.00
Kleiner Perkins	\$981.88	4	1040	\$16.00
DH Private Equity Partners	\$858.58	1	153	\$10.00
Y Combinator	\$615.01	30	4773	\$150.91
Vestar Capital Partners	\$552.00	4	218	\$29.00

Profiles of specific connections to the genocide in Palestine

In this section, we profile specific financial ties to the genocide that the University holds through its investments in private equity, venture capital, and hedge funds. The first three sections here — on drones, other weapons tech, and spyware — discuss connections to the UM endowment at the level of individual companies. The fourth section here discusses connections at the fund manager level, exploring the politics of a fund in general.

We focus on these connections with nonmarketable alternative investments because they receive the majority of the university's investments and have underreported connections to the military industrial complex compared to the important but already-publicized links that have appeared on the official BDS movements' list of targets.

Drones and robotics companies

Drones and other robotic tools used in Israel's genocide.

Shield AI

Shield AI is an American startup that produces self-piloted drones, some of which are sold to the IOF. These include the [Nova 2](#), prized for its ability to conduct surveillance autonomously, in remote areas, and in indoor or other confined spaces. Shield AI is [aiming](#) to sell to the US military as well, though they have had less success even after the deployment of their drones since October 7.

a16z, which has received \$127M from the University of Michigan endowment, participated in several funding rounds with other firms, which resulted in \$478M being distributed to Shield AI.

Skydio

Skydio is a Silicon Valley-based drone company that in the three weeks since October 7 had “sent more than 100 drones to the Israeli Defense Forces, with more to come,” [according](#) to an executive.

Skydio has received funding from Accel and a16z; the two firms participated with other companies in funding rounds that totaled \$70M. a16z also participated in a separate later stage funding round that totaled \$499M. UM has invested \$127M into a16z and Accel \$298M.

Anduril

Anduril is a US-based military contractor that received founding investments from Palantir and SpaceX, and which began in connection with the infamous [Project Maven](#) (an initiative opposed by folks at Google especially, including Meredith Whittaker who now is President of Signal). Like Palantir, Anduril's name was taken from *The Lord of the Rings*, specifically after an unbreakable sword. Anduril primarily develops autonomous systems and AI technology, including image recognition systems and other sensors for [drones](#). Anduril has advocated for the U.S. military to expand its investment into technology like the kind Anduril develops, believing the military's current billions to be short of what it should actually be spending and especially to outrank other nations like

China. Anduril also develops [sentry towers](#) to monitor the U.S.-Mexico border, providing this technology in competition with (but also [complementary](#) to) a longer-range system produced by the infamous Elbit Systems, an Israeli military contractor that produces [85%](#) of the IOF's land-based equipment and drones.

Anduril receives funding from several firms that have received investment from the University of Michigan. Through several funding rounds, it has received \$2.27 billion in funding from firms including 8VC, a16z, General Catalyst, and Lightspeed Venture Partners.

- UM has invested \$165M to 8VC.
- UM has invested \$127M in Andreessen Horowitz
- UM has invested \$37M in General Catalyst
- UM made an investment of an undisclosed amount to Lightspeed Venture Partners

SZ DJI Technology Company

Chinese firm that produces drones used by the IOF; [blacklisted](#) by the US (due to allegations about use in Xinjiang).

Accel and Kleiner Perkins were part of SZ DJI's May 2015 later stage VC funding round, which totaled \$75M. HongShan participated in a separate funding round that totaled \$30M of investment. UM has invested \$298M into Accel, \$75M into HongShan, and \$16M into Kleiner Perkins.

Gecko Robotics

Robots that assess infrastructure conditions, [used](#) by the IOF and in Ukraine.

Y Combinator gave \$150,000 in seed funding to Gecko and participated in a later funding round that totaled \$49.1M. Y Combinator has received \$151M in funding across five funds from UM.

Convexum (former investment)

Counter-drone Israeli company, acquired by the highly controversial NSO Group (then sold to Berkeley Research Group and renamed Sentrycs); currently [used](#) by the IOF.

Convexum's acquisition by NSO Group was facilitated by its then-owner Francisco Partners, for \$60M. Francisco Partners has received \$245M from UM across nine deals.

Airobotics (former investment)

An Israeli counter-drone systems company that produces the "Iron Drone" which is being enhanced and upgraded for [use by the IOF](#) in Gaza.

BlueRun Ventures was part of both early and later stage funding rounds for Airobotics, which totaled \$102M in funding. BlueRun has received \$70M from UM across four deals.

Weapons and military tech companies

Production of other military equipment, weapons and technology employed by the IOF.

Cobham and Ultra Electronics

Cobham and its subsidiary Ultra Electronics are major suppliers to the UK military, and among their many projects have participated in [the construction of F-35 warplanes](#) which were then used by Israel in its bombardments of Gaza.

Blackstone and Advent jointly acquired Cobham in January 2020 for \$5.2 billion. They financed Cobham's acquisition of Ultra Electronics in August 2022 for \$3.1 billion. UM has invested \$275M across eleven deals to Advent International, and \$60M across four deals to Blackstone.

Edgybees

An Israel AI startup which provides the Israeli military with software that facilitates targeting using aerial video/satellite imagery, and is [being used by IOF forces](#) to strike Palestinian targets with "precision."

Edgybees has received \$15M in startup funding from 8VC, which has received \$165M in investments across four deals from the University of Michigan.

Spyware, repression and global harms

Tools of repression and exportation of Zionist harms worldwide

Paragon Solutions

A cybersecurity start-up from Tel Aviv which claims to give the Israeli government surveillance capabilities against end-to-end encrypted messaging services such as WhatsApp and Signal. The three co-founders of Paragon Solutions are all former Israeli intelligence staff, [including former Israeli Prime Minister](#), Ehud Barak, who is also director of the board, and chief shareholder. While a [competitor](#) of NSO Group, it has taken steps to keep the US in its corner and evade delegitimization.

Battery Ventures was part of Paragon Solutions' seed funding round in 2021. Battery has received \$96M in investment across 15 deals from the University of Michigan.

Toka

Israeli spyware firm cofounded by former PM Ehud Barak, and overseen by the Israeli Ministry of Defense. Toka has arguably produced more harmful spyware than the infamous NSO Group-owned Pegasus, but has avoided public attention more successfully; capabilities [include](#) "finding, accessing, and manipulating security and smart camera footage." This [article](#) does a deep dive into Toka's role in global repression and apartheid, including likely use for blackmail (such as well-known Israeli blackmail of Palestinians) and suppressing support for Palestine around the world.

a16z and Eclipse Ventures were part of Toka's 2018 and 2020 fundraising rounds, which amounted to \$39.5M in total funding to Toka. UM has invested \$127M across 16 deals to a16z and \$152M across 6 deals to Eclipse.

Oosto

Formerly known as AnyVision, Oosto is an Israeli AI company that produces facial recognition software which plays a significant role in Israel's [techno-apartheid](#), for instance by surveilling Palestinians in the West Bank at checkpoints. After Microsoft faced criticism for investing in AnyVision, they [divested](#) their stake in 2020. Recently Oosto has increased its focus on the private sector, with particular emphasis on [casino surveillance](#) in the US.

Lightspeed Ventures Partners was part of three funding rounds to Oosto, which amounted to \$352M in total funding to Oosto. UM has invested an undisclosed amount into Lightspeed Venture Partners.

NSO Group (former investment)

A cybersecurity company that develops hacking tools to be used around the globe. Most serious among these is [Pegasus](#), which has been sold to repressive regimes to be used against journalists and activists (including Saudi Arabia for use against Jamal Khashoggi, and [Israel itself](#)); currently blacklisted by the US.

NSO Group was bought by Francisco Partners for \$130M in 2014 and sold for about \$1 billion in 2019. UM has invested \$245M across nine deals to Francisco Partners.

Pentera (former investment)

Pentera is a cybersecurity company specializing in penetration testing ("pentesting"), with many of its former officers coming from the IDF's cybersecurity units. These include CTO Arik Liberzon, who [led pentesting operations at the IDF](#); VP of Research Alex Spivakovski, [who developed](#) "red team" (simulated attack) skills as a Technology Officer at the IDF; and Roey Azrak, Solutions Architect [who was](#) a former "Red-Team Leader in an IDF elite unit." Preference for IDF cyber team veterans is mentioned in [their job postings](#).

Pentera has been described as "a classic example of a civilian solution born from military experience, where the software developed by the company tries to identify security weaknesses in corporate information systems by its own proactive attack attempts." Rather than developing nefarious technology outright, Pentera illustrates how Israel's broad technological abilities — even its innocuous ones — are developed from surveillance and hacking programs in the IDF.

Blackstone has participated in funding rounds totaling \$185M for Pentera. Blackstone has received \$60M over four deals from the UM endowment.

Attenti (former investment)

Attenti Group is a security company based in Tel Aviv, Israel and makes surveillance and GPS tracking technology used by the carceral system. Their products include ankle monitoring systems, breathalyzers with facial recognition technology, and GPS tracking software. Attenti Group has contracts globally, including various

State Correctional Departments in the United States, [like here in Michigan](#). Attenti Group was acquired by 3M in 2010 for \$230 Million. Allied Universal, the largest security contracting company in the US and owners of former BDS targeted company G4S, bought Attenti Group from 3M in 2022.

Francisco Partners and Sequoia Capital, along with nGage Specialist Recruitment (not profiled here), bought Attenti in 2009 for \$75M. The UM endowment has invested \$245M in Francisco across nine deals and \$391M in Sequoia across forty-four deals.

Netafim (former investment)

Israeli irrigation company which has been [involved](#) in the sustenance of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and in the corporate takeover of farming in India. [Sold](#) to Mexichem in 2017 for \$1.9B.

Netafim was bought by PE firm Permira for \$1.06B in 2011 (eventually sold to Mexichem, as mentioned above). Permira has received \$56M from the UM endowment across four deals.

Hedge funds, venture capital firms, and private equity firms

Sequoia Capital

Sequoia Capital is an American venture capital firm headquartered in Menlo Park, which specializes in seed stage, early stage, and growth stage investments in private companies across technology sectors. Sequoia has received \$391 million from the UM endowment across forty-four deals, more deals than any other single fund manager from the UM endowment. This fund split into multiple international subsidiaries in 2023, with their Israeli branch renamed into S. Capital VC.

Sequoia Capital Israel Branch along with Francisco Partners bought out Attenti Group, LLC. in 2009 for \$75.2 Million.

Bain

Bain Capital is an alternative investment firm specializing in private equity, venture capital, and credit products. In 2015 they acquired Blue Coat Systems, a hardware, software, cybersecurity and network management company, for \$2.4 billion. Blue Coat devices can be used by governments to censor and monitor the public's internet traffic, and has come under investigation by the Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto. The company also came under investigation by the U.S. government after the hacktivist group Telecomix made allegations that Syria and Iran were using Blue Coat to censor activists. Blue Coat was acquired by Symantec for \$4.65 billion in 2016 and then moved to Broadcom as part of Broadcom's acquisition of several Symantec divisions in 2019.

Bain was also part of an \$80M funding round for Forescout Technologies, which [has won multiple contracts](#) with the Department of Defense for protecting [“critical assets across its entire infrastructure.”](#)

UM has invested in Bain a total of \$634 million across twenty-three deals to Bain Capital, Bain Capital Credit, and Bain Capital Ventures. This makes Bain the largest single recipient of UM money.

Accel

Accel has received \$298M across 33 deals from the UM endowment. Accel is a technology focused venture capital fund, which has invested at least \$565.21 million in Israeli businesses. Additionally, they performed a buyout of Digital Force Technologies in 2008, which is “focused on technology and prototype development for the most elite military units in the United States arsenal” (not a current investment).

Their most egregious investment in Israel is \$25 million invested in 2004 into Transtech Control, a technology company which has contracted with the IDF, Israeli Navy, and Israeli Aerospace Industries. These companies provide control and monitoring systems for airfield visual navigation aids.

Most of their Israeli investments are in companies involved in app development, or cyber security. They have also invested \$48 million into MyHeritage, and \$95 million into fiverr.

TCV

TCV is a technology focused venture capital firm based in Menlo Park with \$25 billion in assets. TCV has received \$300M in investment across ten deals from the University of Michigan.

TCV invests in cybersecurity firms Avalor and Legit Security, as well as healthcare startup Aidoc. Legit Security was started by three men who met in the IDF’s 8200 unit for cyber warfare, also working in Microsoft and Israeli cybersecurity company Checkmarx, described below. TCV describes Legit Security’s services as “safeguarding the software supply chain.”

TPG (NAS: TPG)

TGP is a Texas based private equity firm with \$212 billion in assets. They acquired Mid America Precision Products (MAPP), a company which manufactures custom made machine parts for defense contractors, in 2018. MAPP specializes in aerospace, and maritime parts.

Most of TGP’s Israeli investments are in technology and cyber security. One such notable investment is Checkmarx which is an Israeli company part of the Israeli Cyber Companies Consortium, a group led by Israel Aerospace Industries, dedicated to providing cybersecurity to national governments around the world, including the Israeli government. TPG bought Checkmarx for \$1.15 billion in 2020.

TPG has received \$191M across eight deals from the University of Michigan.

Francisco Partners

Francisco Partners is a Menlo Park-based private equity firm focused on technology. They have received \$145M in total from the University of Michigan across 7 deals, and to our knowledge have distributed \$997M to 12

Israeli companies, and at least \$36M to satellite company Terran Orbital, which counts among its customers the U.S. military.

The largest investment in Israel from Francisco is a \$600M investment in 2021 into the genealogy company MyHeritage, which claims that “your DNA reveals your unique heritage – the ethnic groups and geographic regions you originate from.” [Here’s an article](#) from Jewish Voices for Labour that delves into the biological imagination of Zionism more closely (and where the above quote was taken from). The other incredibly serious connection to the genocide from Francisco Partners is a \$130M buyout in 2014 of NSO Group. Francisco Partners sold its ownership of NSO Group after much controversy in 2019 back to its founders for about \$1B.

Madison Dearborn Partners

Madison Dearborn Partners (MDP) is a private equity firm based in Chicago, managing around \$23 billion in total assets. The UM endowment has contributed \$135M to Dearborn across 6 deals.

Madison Dearborn acquired Aevex Aerospace for \$450M in March 2020. Aevex is most famous for developing the Phoenix Ghost drone for the U.S. military, which was [used for the first time on a large scale in the war in Ukraine](#). The Phoenix Ghost “loiters” around its target before attacking it when it is visible by crashing into it and detonating its built-in explosive. [Some pundits](#) have understood the deployment of this drone (alongside the work of contractors Anduril, covered here, and AeroVironment) in Ukraine alongside the U.S. military’s carrier deployment in Israel as a precursor for heightened militarization and investment into military tech.

With Aevex, Madison Dearborn acquired the aerospace intelligence company IKHANA Group for an undisclosed amount in October 2020, as part of its effort to become a leading force in “intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance” (ISR). IKHANA has [worked with Lockheed Martin](#), the [Vietnam Navy](#), and received funding from the DoD through [contracts from Northrop Grunman](#).

Madison Dearborn has also acquired defense contractor LinQuest for an undisclosed amount in May 2018. LinQuest is a tech company offering “Advanced digital solutions and mission critical systems for defense and intelligence missions,” and has created tech for many different U.S. military sectors. [It received a \\$200 million contract in 2021](#) to “provide support for Space Operations Command,” and [received a \\$562 million contract](#) to provide engineering support for the US Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center (SMC) satellites.

Andreessen Horowitz

Andreessen Horowitz, commonly known as a16z, is a prominent Silicon Valley-based venture capital firm led by Marc Andreessen and Ben Horowitz. a16z has received \$127M from the University of Michigan across sixteen deals. They control about \$35 billion and invest in drone and robotics companies (some supplying the IOF), such as Shield AI, Anduril and Skydio.

Andreessen Horowitz is so prolific in supplying defense companies that it is [cited as](#) “leading the charge in the defense tech space” by *Forbes* and as a “defense VC” by [critics](#). a16z also participated in funding rounds amounting to about \$2.2 billion to Anduril, profiled above, as well as funding rounds totaling \$90M to startup Hadrian which produces machining parts for defense contractors.

A16z is highly vocal and highly controversial, even within the tech world. a16z led a much-criticized [\\$70M funding round](#) in May of last year for a crypto venture led by Adam Neumann, of WeWork disgrace. a16z as a whole is [anti-SEC regulation](#), and Marc Andreessen himself has been known to publish writing [mocked as](#) a “frenzied, 5,000-word blog post that somehow manages to re-invent Reaganomics, propose the colonization of outer space and unironically answer a question with the phrase ‘QED.’”

Graham Partners

Graham Partners is a private equity firm based in Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. The firm is focused on acquiring and investing in growth-oriented companies involved in industrial technology, software, and advanced manufacturing businesses. They have received over \$120,679,029 from UM.

In February 2023, Graham Partners became majority owner of Tavalas, an antennae and Internet of Things (IoT) components manufacturer. In June of 2023, the Ireland-based company announced their distribution agreement in Israel with the hi-tech distributor Eastronics. Eastronics is responsible for the distribution of the X-ray and CT Smith Detection Systems, located at various Israeli checkpoints and airports.

A year prior in 2022, Graham Partners invested \$32 million into Kinova Robotics, developers of robotic arms for medical and industrial use. Kinova Robotics partnered with the United States Department of Homeland Security, Israel’s Ministry of Public Security, and the Israel National Police Bomb Disposal Division to [create a robotic arm for the Andros Wolverine Robot](#) (created by a Northrop Grumman subsidiary). The Andros Wolverine is a popular robot used by the Israeli Police and IOF.

Berkshire Partners

Berkshire Partners is a private equity firm based in Boston, Massachusetts who primarily invests in companies operating in the wireless access, data center & cloud, and network infrastructure, communications and digital infrastructure, consumer, healthcare, services & industrials, and technology sectors. They have received \$170 million from UM.

CDH Investments

CDH Investments is a private equity firm that manages funds in several major cities across China to which UM has made a \$37M commitment. In 2016, CDH made a \$4.4B acquisition of Playtika by CDH in 2016, an Israeli mobile-gaming company that makes popular online gambling apps such as Slotomania and Bingo Blitz. CDH also acquired two subsidiary companies of Playtika, such as the online advertisement company Aditor for \$10M and game developer Jelly Button games for an undisclosed amount, both based in Tel Aviv. The multi-billion dollar acquisition of Playtika would be CDH’s third largest investment in available data.

CDH has received \$37M across four deals from the University of Michigan.

Battery Ventures

Battery Ventures is a venture-capital firm based in Boston, primarily investing in technology and software companies, to which UM has committed \$96M. The firm has participated in a total investment of \$2.46B to Israeli companies, notably a joint \$296.7M investment in radar-imaging company Vayyar Imaging based in Yehud-Monosson, Israel.

Additionally, Battery Ventures has invested an amount between \$5-10M to Paragon Solutions, a cybersecurity start-up from Tel Aviv which claims to give the Israeli government surveillance capabilities against end-to-end encrypted messaging services such as WhatsApp and Signal. The three co-founders of Paragon Solutions are all former Israeli intelligence staff and the director of the board is former Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak.

Permira

Permira is a private equity investment firm based in London, receiving a \$57M commitment from UM. Permira has invested \$1.1B in Israeli companies, most notably a \$1.06B acquisition of Netafim in 2011 (a company which BDS has condemned for operating in illegal settlements in the West Bank), which it has since sold. In May 2023, Permira alongside Cyverse Capital invested \$40M in BioCatch, an Israeli biometrics company based in Tel Aviv and founded by former members of the IDF's Unit 8200 military intelligence unit.

Permira has received \$56M in investment across four deals from the University of Michigan.

8VC

8VC has received \$165M in investment across four deals from UM and is invested in a number of Israeli and/or military-adjacent companies, including Palantir, Edgybees and Anduril.

Palantir produces surveillance monitoring software for parties including the U.S. government. Palantir was a major target of the U.S. #NoTechForICE movement for its enabling of ICE in locating and imprisoning or deporting undocumented immigrants. In 2019, Mijente [reported](#) Palantir to have \$1.5billion in active contracts with the U.S. military. Palantir also provides tooling to the [LAPD](#).

Another investment is AI21 Labs (\$7.5M in seed funding in 2019) – an Israeli AI company specializing in natural language processing, which is aiding Israel's war and propaganda efforts, e.g. by [aiding](#) in the Zionist narrative about Oct 7 (to seek ICC judgment against Hamas). A representative said: "All of us at AI21 are committed to doing our utmost to support Israel. In addition to the funds donated by the company and its employees, we offer Wordtune for advocacy purposes. Furthermore, we're providing our LLMs and Task Specific APIs to aid in various war-related efforts."

Blackstone

In addition to being the world's largest public equity firm and the largest overall investor by defense companies tracked by our group, [Blackstone is a major target of divestment campaigns](#), especially in the UC system, for which it holds approximately \$6.5 billion. Blackstone was one of many companies that took advantage of cheap

housing after the 2008 financial crisis to build a portfolio of single-family homes, today holding a jaw-dropping \$991 billion in assets.

Blackstone's investments into the military-industrial complex are noted in the profile for PE firm Advent, as Advent led the major deals Blackstone participated in. Besides these buyouts of defense contractors, Blackstone is most famous for being the [largest commercial landlord](#) in history, and has bought out the largest supplier of private student housing in the United States. Blackstone has been criticized by the UN for [opportunistic profiteering](#) and contributing to the global housing crisis.

Blackstone has received \$60M in investments from the University of Michigan.

Advent

Advent is a global private equity firm founded in the US. In Jan 2020, Advent [bought](#) Cobham International, a UK weapons manufacturer, for £4B (around \$5B) after some controversy. Blackstone also purchased a minority stake in the company (according to this [UK report](#) from Oct 2019, Advent acquired a 83.2% stake and Blackstone acquired a 16.8% stake). Since then, Advent has sold at least [eight](#) of its business units, raising [continued concerns](#) about the impact of foreign equity in the UK.

In August 2022, Advent [bought](#) Ultra Electronics, another UK weapons manufacturer, for £2.6B (around \$3.1B). Blackstone again took on a minority stake, and Ultra Electronics was subsumed under Cobham.

Advent has received \$275M in investment across eleven deals from the University of Michigan endowment.

General Catalyst

General Catalyst has received \$37M from the University of Michigan and has participated in \$2.9 billion' worth of funding to companies in aerospace and defense. \$2.15 billion of this funding, over four rounds of funding, went to Anduril, profiled above.

Kreos Capital

Invests primarily in Israeli and European tech companies. These include participation in a \$168M funding round for BioCatch (described above in our profile for Permira, which also participated), and \$150M for Cheq, a market security firm. Both BioCatch and Cheq were founded by graduates of the IDF's 8200 unit specializing in cyber warfare.

Kreos has received \$26M in investment from the University of Michigan endowment.

Regent investment connections

The UM endowment is directly connected to some companies that are the beneficiaries of eLab Ventures, which is managed by Regent Paul Brown. Akadeum Life Sciences received a \$17.72M investment from the endowment in September 2021, and eLab Ventures made a \$6M investment to Akadeum in May 2023. Douglas Neal from eLab Ventures is on the board of Akadeum. UM placed investments totaling \$7.96M, \$6.50M, and \$5M into MemryX in January 2023, February 2021, and February 2019. eLab made an investment of an undisclosed amount to MemryX sometime in 2019, as an early-stage VC supporter.

Oil and gas investments

The University has invested at least \$1.06 billion into funds specializing in oil and gas, the largest being a \$75M commitment to Kayne Private Energy Income Fund II. Funds that the university works with in general have contributed \$5.7 billion into oil and gas companies.

Some of these companies have direct ties to the Israeli state. As recently as 2020, UM held 132,511 shares (worth \$1,810,914) in Noble Energy Inc. (parent company: Chevron), an oil and gas producer with key assets in Israel. Noble Energy has investments in and owns platforms in Israeli gas field operations including Tamar gas field, Leviathan natural gas field, and Energean Israel. Also in 2020, UM held 420,954 shares (worth \$2,939,114) in BP, which was [awarded a gas exploration license by Israel amidst the ongoing genocide](#).

The university has [already committed](#) to divesting from fossil fuels, and has boasted about their progress investing in “green energy.” The university’s strategy so far to follow its promises here have focused more on investment in green energy than in divestment from fossil fuels; the endowment still is complicit in climate change in ways we should be attentive to. The university may be contractually obligated to keep their money in these funds. Still, pressure on a regular and transparent divestment schedule may be a useful demand; more on this below.

Campaigning for transparency around the endowment

Of the 948 commitments from UM that we track, we lack data on the exact amount that UM has contributed for 203 commitments. For 61 of the funds we know UM has invested into, amounting to over \$1.8B in investments from the UM endowment, we do not have data on the investments that these funds in turn have made. These may be because they are exempt from certain SEC reporting requirements, as we have found a few cases of [SEC Form Ds](#) associated with these companies that mark this exemption. These funds mostly deal in real estate or debt.

We don't want to let our lack of data excuse these funds from potentially shady activities, or the UM endowment from accountability. We are certain UM has a mountain of research on all of their investments that, with exceptions, have not been released to the public. **Pressuring UM to release their records of their commitments to all funds on a regular schedule, as well as their research on all funds and especially funds specializing in real estate and debt, can be a good demand for our coalition.**

Information on private equity, hedge funds, and venture capital is useful, but we already have a plethora of data on these commitments, in fact far more detail than what the university has previously released via FOIA filings. **We do need information on UM's public equity holdings that are up-to-date.** Records on all other types of investments still can be part of an overall demand for transparency, but public equity holdings are of the most value for us. We will continue to badger the university with FOIA requests, and going forward a demand for transparency that prioritizes public equity holdings can be useful.

Other campaigns for transparent investment practices may also be useful, separate from data-gathering and research. Having some sort of student-led "Responsible Investments Advisory Board" can be a very palatable (and thus of course potentially useless) concession the university may make.

Further reading

Some perspectives on the role VCs are playing in militarism and Israel's genocide:

- From Stavroula Pabst at Common Dreams: [Venture Capitalists Are Looking for a Fight](#)
- From Shanley.com: [Israel, Venture Capital Collaboration and the Genocide of Palestinians](#)
- From Stavroula Pabst at Responsible Statecraft: [Do venture capitalists want forever war?](#)
- By Charlie Eaton: [Bankers in the Ivory Tower](#)
- By Corey Payne in Jacobin: [How Financial Institutions Like Silicon Valley Bank Fund the Weapons Industry](#)
- By Eric Lipton in the New York Times: [The Pentagon Road to Venture Capital](#)
- By Brett Christopher: [Our Lives in Their Portfolios](#)
- By Antony Loewenstein: [The Palestine Laboratory](#)
- Jack Poulson's [TechInquiry tool](#) and associated [“Easy as PAI” report](#)
- By Sean Captain, featuring Jack Poulson, at FastCompany: [Meet the ex-Googler who's exposing the tech-military industrial complex](#)