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The Israel Cancer Association threatened to cancel its research grants to the university if the event went ahead.

By JUDY SIEGEL-ITZKOVICH \ 01/04/2015 15:30

Tel Aviv University has backed out of its agreement with the Philip Morris Tobacco Company (Altria Group) that the firm provide scholarships to TAU's School of Marketing students. The decision was made last week after the Israel Cancer Association (ICA) threatened to cancel its research grants to TAU scientists.

The university publicized an invitation to a "festive event" due to be held on January, 6 sponsored by Philip Morris – the largest tobacco company in the world – to recruit marketing students who will soon complete their bachelor's and master's degrees, but lack experience in the business world.

The tobacco company invited the marketing students to take advantage of the "unique opportunity" to hear about its activities and to "meet senior managers and the variety of jobs in the company."

The ICA called for the immediate cancellation of the event and to avoid giving patronage to the tobacco industry, "which causes sickness and death among the users of its products." The ICA also called on the university's president and deans of the schools of medicine, life sciences, and management to ensure the event was canceled.

If not, said the ICA, it would freeze all new research grants for

which TAU faculty and students would apply.

In 2014, the ICA awarded more than NIS 600,000 to TAU researchers, it said.

A few years ago, the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) recommended against cooperating with or helping universities or other institutions that receive money from tobacco firms, and the ICA approved the recommendation a short time ago.

ICA president Prof. Eliezer Robinson, a former president of the UICC, stated: “It is unthinkable that with one hand we will help your excellent and devoted researchers to fight cancer and with the other hand TAU will strengthen and encourage this devastating industry that causes cancer [and other diseases].

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Health/TAU-cancels-Philip-Morris-event-following-pressure-from-cancer-organization-386621>