

SLINGSHOT

LOS ANGELES
Edition

in·no·va·tion (noun)

• a mode of operating, of finding new ways to create impact

We are pleased to partner with Slingshot to bring you this edition of *Slingshot*, which highlights innovative organizations in and around Los Angeles.

Introduction

As funders active in Los Angeles, we are pleased to partner with Slingshot to bring you this edition of *Slingshot*, which highlights some of the most innovative organizations in and around L.A.

As you will experience in the pages of this guide, there is a tremendous amount of innovation happening in all areas of Jewish life across the community, some of which you may not even be aware. We are thrilled to showcase 26 projects in this largest-ever local edition of *Slingshot*. We hope this guide inspires you to find new programs in which you, your family and your friends can become involved. Visit these organizations' websites, go to their activities and support them financially. We are so inspired by the Jewish innovation in this region. Join us in celebration and help Jewish life continue to thrive in L.A. and beyond!

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Associate Director,
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Welcome to the 2017 Los Angeles edition of *Slingshot*. In 2016, the national *Slingshot Guide* featured more L.A. organizations than any other region, leading us to the realization that it was time for a local edition. We are thrilled to present this 2017 L.A. guide highlighting a region that is consistently at the forefront of Jewish innovation both on the West Coast and nationally. L.A.'s Jewish innovators, funders, and community continue to prove that the creative expressions of Jewish life we've highlighted over *Slingshot*'s 12 years are alive and well—and leading—in local communities all over the country.

In 2005, *Slingshot*'s founders set out “to collect, in one digest, some of the more exciting new expressions of Jewish life in America,” to be used by funders of all sizes and ages to support creative expressions of Jewish life. As we continue to search out the most innovative projects, we are happy to see local Jewish communities leading the charge with such enthusiasm and creativity. There can be no doubt, in looking through the guide's pages over the years, that L.A. has long been home to some of the most innovative projects in Jewish life. Whether you find new organizations that began in response to a local need or discover a national organization that has opened its doors in L.A. to impact local issues, this guide paints the picture of a vibrant community that is setting the pace

for the rest of the country in new ways. We hope that you will use this book as a resource to inspire a deeper connection to Jewish life in L.A. Find something that excites you and make a gift or get involved with one of these groups. Your support of their work will strengthen the field at an important moment in our collective history. Your participation in any one of these wonderful programs will inspire you. Supporting continued growth in the sector and helping to nurture an ongoing culture of innovation are critical for the future of Jewish life in L.A. and beyond.

Thank you for your interest in the guide. We look forward to hearing your feedback about this L.A. edition of *Slingshot*. We will continue to highlight innovation in L.A. and hope you will join us as we celebrate and explore this exciting space both on and off the page!

Stefanie Rhodes

Executive Director, Slingshot

Evaluating Innovation in an Evolving Ecosystem

We are proud to introduce our new approach to both applying to and evaluating applications for the *Slingshot Guide*. After 12 years of highlighting innovation in an ever-changing community, we updated our methodology to best reflect the realities of the Jewish innovation space today. We can no longer rely on a one-size-fits-all tactic to understanding Jewish innovation. Organizations that were launched in the early 2000s have evolved, new organizations continue to emerge, and legacy institutions have embraced innovation. In creating a 2017 *Slingshot Guide* that celebrates the evolution of the innovation ecosystem, we wanted to not just showcase creative thinking and bold ideas, but also recognize the challenges and opportunities presented at each life stage.

With an understanding that every organization has its own unique journey, we asked applicants to apply based on one of three broad life stages: start-up, mezzanine, and legacy. Although organizations found they embodied characteristics of more than one category, they were asked to apply in the category that most represented their current status.

After selecting their category, they received an application that asked stage-specific questions. Evaluators then reviewed the application, using criteria we outlined for each of the life stages. They took into account the challenges and opportunities

present at each stage. We are pleased to share this methodology. We hope that this new approach provided organizations with an improved construct to share their stories and that this data serves to educate the broader field on the organizational realities that exist today.

This new methodology was created through extensive research inside and outside of Jewish life and with the wisdom and partnership of our friends and colleagues at Bikkurim, Joshua Venture, Upstart, and PresenTense. We are grateful to them and especially to Aliza Mazor, for being true collaborators and partners in this process.

It is our belief that in order to best support innovative organizations, we must understand their struggles and support them on their continued journey. We hope you find this tool useful, not only for understanding our methodology but for your own work.

Rachel Hodes

Director of Community Experience
Slingshot

STEP 1: APPLICATION

Applications open for the upcoming year's guide in early fall. Organizations and projects that serve a North American audience and have been in existence for a minimum of one year are eligible to apply.

 **181** Applications



In 2017, organizations were invited to apply in one of three categories: start-up, mezzanine, or legacy, based on their organizational life stage.

92 Evaluators



INNOVATION



IMPACT



STRONG LEADERSHIP



ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS



STEP 2: EVALUATION

Each application is read by multiple evaluators, including one who is familiar with the organization's sector and one who is not. The mix of perspectives gives a well-balanced review. Applicants are evaluated on four selection criteria.

STEP 3: FINAL LIST

Slingshot staff review qualitative and quantitative evaluation data for each organization. This data determines the final list of organizations featured in the guide(s). Auditors review the data to ensure fairness and accountability to the process.



STEP 4: GUIDE PRODUCTION

Profiles highlighting each organization's activities and innovation(s) are written. Slingshot writers seek to capture the unique character of each organization and present its creativity.

STEP 5: PUBLICATION

The guide is published and released widely.



And this fall, the cycle begins again!

ORGANIZATIONAL LIFE STAGE

There are certain factors that contribute to an organization's life stage: age, finances, staff, governance, programs/services, systems, evaluation/impact, mission/vision, visibility, partnership. The adjacent chart outlines the three stages of organizational development as we understand them.¹ The stages can be broadly defined as:

Start-up

"A start-up organization is in its earliest stages of development. It typically has a founder with a vision or idea and has just begun to establish a funding stream, employee structure, business model, and practices and approaches. Its programming is highly experimental."²

Start-up organizational challenges are mostly foundational and focused on survival, specifically around: funding, staff/volunteer expertise; sustaining enthusiasm; refining mission/vision; absence of administrative and evaluation systems.

Mezzanine

"An organization is in the mezzanine phase following its start-up phase. By this point, the organization may have pilot tested its organizational idea, documented outcomes, and developed a written plan for growth, but it has not yet achieved large geographic scale or wide adoption. Sometimes known as post-start-up, [these organizations] have established a track record of funding, engaged a set of people in defined roles, formed a board, written a set of policies, and defined its business model."³

Mezzanine organizational challenges deal mostly with sustainability, building capacity, and obtaining funding to support that work. Specific issues include: funding for capacity, rather than programmatic

efforts; board transition from working/volunteer focused to governance/policy focused; onboarding staff with expertise and merging with the long-standing generalist staff; maintaining innovative culture; creating a theory of change/strategic plan around data.

Legacy

Legacy organizations are "marked by greater brand awareness—of the organization and its programs and services. The nonprofit is larger and has more hierarchy, with clearly defined management roles. In this stage, the fundraising program has become more sophisticated, perhaps including an endowment or planned giving. The nonprofit has established a strategic plan and is governed by a more diverse board of directors."⁴

Legacy organization challenges are mostly focused on reducing stagnation, encouraging risk-taking, and creating a culture of innovation, specifically around resistance to change; need for new leadership (staff/lay); less touch points with the core "client" demographic, which creates misunderstandings about what the community is/may be looking for; and rigid systems.

¹ Much of the information in this chart and the stage descriptions is from *From First Fruits to Abundant Harvest: Maximizing the Potential of Innovative Jewish Start-Ups*. Bikkurim, Wellspring Consulting. 14 March 2012: <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=13781>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ *Thriving Throughout the Stages of a Nonprofit Organization*. Pacific Continental Bank, 2011. <https://www.therightbank.com/sites/www.therightbank.com/files/files/Business%20Resources/White%20Papers/Nonprofit/white-paper-thriving-through-stages-of-nonprofits.pdf>



	START-UP	MEZZANINE	LEGACY
Age	0–7 years	8–19 years	20 years or more
Finances	Budget of under \$1 million	Budget of \$1 million to \$3 million, diversified funding base, and emergence of formal fundraising efforts	Budget of more than \$3 million, stable fundraising operation, focus on endowment and reserve funding
Staff	Staff members are volunteers or generalists.	Staff members have more varied roles with formal and specific job descriptions, and staff structures have taken shape.	Staff is differentiated and hired with specific expertise in mind. Staff is at saturation point.
Governance	Working board comprised of friends/families of founder	Diversified board, which can provide “wealth, wisdom, and work” and has been recruited for relevant professional experience	Well-developed board focused on sustaining longevity of organization, mainly focused on policy and setting direction
Programs / services	Successful pilots, early signs of success, resonance with target audience	Increased participation, increased number of programs, measurable growth coming from demand from the market, refinement of program delivery	Core programs are well designed and operating at a high level, while long-term program planning occurs and new programs are being tried.
Systems	Few formal systems or infrastructure	Administrative staff hired. Staff space acquired. Hardware acquired and policies begin to form.	Formal departments, owned or permanently rented space, administrative systems are formal and stable.
Evaluation / impact	Rudimentary evaluation systems in place	Formal evaluation systems take shape. Theory of change created. Growth plan or strategic plan created and in place.	Formal evaluation system with clear data to be shown. New program clearly relates to theory of change or fits into strategic plan.
Mission / vision	Compelling mission/vision	Compelling mission/vision; plus, theory of change or logic model	Compelling mission/vision; plus, theory of change or logic model
Visibility	Seen primarily for its mission/ideas. Brand recognition is just beginning.	Organization regarded as having expertise. Brand recognition in service of reaching new audiences.	Solid brand identity and greater brand awareness
Partnership	Early-stage partnerships used to help gain credibility and leverage visibility	Strong asset as recognized by peers. More and varied partners.	Formal, long-term partnerships established

SELECTION CRITERIA

There are also differences between life stages within the *Slingshot Guide* selection criteria. As innovation is inherently comparative, it manifests differently at each stage. Therefore, evaluators were given both a broad definition of each selection criterion and a specific life-stage-dependent one. The selection criteria are defined as follows:

Innovation

Innovation is a mode of operating, of finding new ways to create impact. Innovative organizations and programs are ones that are able to act efficiently, adapt to current demands in the community, and create new models for achieving positive outcomes. The drive for relevancy and impact is built into their DNA.⁵ Innovative organizations have a culture of perpetual improvement, where calculated risk is in service of always trying to do better. Innovation can be seen through what the organization does (i.e., the programmatic tactics used to address an unmet need) or how it is done (i.e., the approach used to work with or on behalf of its constituents). Innovation is different at each life stage of an organization.

Start-up organizations are innovative in why they were created. They are groundbreaking, inventive, pioneering, or creative in their response to the changing needs of the Jewish community and the world around it.

Mezzanine organizations are innovative because of their culture of constant improvement. As they grow, they continue to find new ways of doing business and maintaining a thrust toward risk-taking.

Legacy organizations express innovation through projects derived from established structures and a willingness to try operating in new or different ways to best address the changing needs of the Jewish community.

Impact

Impact considers how the organization/project affects the attitudes and behaviors of its constituents and the Jewish community.

Start-up organizations have identified a need and developed a compelling mission/vision around addressing that need. They have rudimentary systems to identify if their programs/services are working but may not have a formal evaluation process.

Mezzanine organizations have shown proof of concept in addressing a specific need and have a theory of change or logic model that is guiding their work. Evaluation systems are more mature, and data is used to infuse growth plans.

Legacy organizations are implementing, working through, or creating a strategic plan around the program, with a specific focus on target goals and measures for evaluating impact. They are evaluating the viability of the project for best practices and scalability.

⁵ *Funding Jewish Innovation: A Resource Guide*, 2011. https://www.jcfny.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/JCF_Innovation_Guide_eVersion.pdf

Strong Leadership in the Field

An organization with strong leadership is a model for the field. It may possess a strategy, an approach, or programmatic content that could be replicable elsewhere and/or that is elevating the work of its peer organizations. Examples of strong leadership are: The organization/project may share resources, knowledge, or best practices with the community; may strategically partner with other organizations; and/or serve to network or convene similar organizations/projects.

Start-up organizations with strong leadership have significant buzz around them. Articles are written about them, staff/lay leaders are asked to present on the organization. Momentum is beginning to build around their work, and partners are beginning to come to the table.

Mezzanine organizations are regarded as having expertise in the field and have begun building brand recognition among their peers. Marketing plans begin to formalize.

Legacy organizations use their brand recognition to help provide leadership in the field around particular issues. They have formal marketing plans and structures in place.

Organizational Effectiveness

Otherwise known as a sound operation, an effective organization is strategic in the way it conducts business. It is financially efficient and responsible and has the appropriate infrastructure (staff, board, volunteers) in order to effectively serve its mission.

Start-up organizations have a small board whose primary role is to work and is often but not always personally connected to the founder; a small, nimble, and multifunctional staff; and a budget that is sufficient to cover the operating costs of the organization.

Mezzanine organizations have grown their board, which has more governance responsibilities and professional expertise within it; a staff with more differentiated and specific roles; a larger budget; and a diversified and increased funding base.

Legacy organizations have an established board with formal committees and roles and is primarily responsible for ensure longevity and well-being of the organization; staff is diversified and hired for their programmatic expertise and staff structures are more hierarchical; and funding is stable and includes an operating reserve or an endowment.

Start-up
organization



Mezzanine
organization



Legacy
organization



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**Producing innovative
and culturally aware
projects and leadership
programming for young
Iranian-American Jewish
professionals, with
the vision of enriching
American Jewish
peoplehood**

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board chair

Sam Yebri

2016 expenses

\$140,000

30 Years After

Ten years ago, a group of young Iranian (Persian) American Jews gathered around a coffee table to make sure their voices were being heard in the Los Angeles Jewish community. From that first meeting 30 Years After was born. Named to mark the moment in history when it was founded (30 years after the Islamic revolution that brought Iranian Jews to Los Angeles), this grass-roots movement is dedicated to promoting the participation and leadership of Iranian-American Jews in American political, civic, and Jewish life. Through culturally aware community building and Jewish programming, promoting and creating methods of participation in communal life, and representing the Iranian-American Jewish community at the tables of major legacy organizations and beyond, 30YA has become an important thread in the fabric of the L.A. Jewish community. Partnering with more than 100 groups, the organization affects the lives of over 10,000 people and is the de facto entry point for anyone interested in engaging the Iranian-American Jewish community.

30YA offers its constituents a myriad of ways to get involved in Jewish and civic life, from service events like cooking Persian food for homeless veterans to the Legacy Project, which captures the stories of Jewish Iran and the community's transition to the U.S., to its popular Power Brunch, a series that brings its community together with political and thought leaders to learn about and act on important topics. Its six-month Maher Fellowship program, designed to train the next generation of Iranian-American Jews to be the lay leaders of tomorrow, has produced 71 alumni, 4 of whom were featured on the Jewish Journal's 2017 "30 Under 30" list. 30YA is committed to representing the passion and dedication of its young community to the larger Jewish landscape and builds bridges with legacy organizations to advocate for Iranian-American Jews who want to—and should—participate. 30YA offers a model for engaging peripheral Jewish communities, while proving that North America's Jewish future is brighter and stronger with everyone's input and voice.

Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice

Believing that the Jewish community has a vital role to play in social justice reform in America, Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice rallies Jews of all ages and backgrounds to speak out on the pressing issues of our time, advocates for a more just and equal society, and works to help elect leaders in service of a more just nation. Bend the Arc gives socially minded Jews multiple entry points for action on issues they care about and since the 2016 election has served as a central place in the Jewish community for those who have been awakened by recent political events and are seeking opportunities to make a difference.

Through online campaigns and an on-the-ground network of local chapters and affiliates, Bend the Arc helps people take action in their own communities, both globally and locally. In the past year, Bend the Arc's grass-roots volunteer efforts in L.A. have helped to pass several local and statewide measures, including stopping long-term solitary confinement for young people, a commitment to ending homelessness and increasing housing access in the city of Los Angeles, and enacting sentencing reform. The Southern California region's criminal justice reform campaign team worked on the implementation of Proposition 47, an effort that increased guaranteed funding for prevention programs (drawn from savings from reduced incarceration), and advocated for L.A.'s Fair Chance Initiative, which allows formerly incarcerated people an even playing field when applying for jobs. The Southern California region's advocacy team worked with members of Bend the Arc in the Bay Area to produce a progressive Jewish voter guide, which analyzed statewide ballot initiatives through a Jewish lens and took positions on them, and engaged in get-out-the-vote work with local partners. Bend the Arc continually inspires Jews of all kinds to reconnect with their heritage and uphold the Jewish legacy of speaking out against unfairness in the world while holding America to its promise of justice and opportunity for all.



Engaging Jews and allies in the work of creating a more just, fair, and compassionate America through organizing, advocacy, and building the next generation of Jewish leaders

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founded
1984

board chair
Mamie Kanfer Stewart

2016 expenses
\$3,235,175



Challah for Hunger

**Bringing people together
to bake and sell challah
in an effort to raise money
and awareness for
social justice causes**

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founded

2004

board chair

Elizabeth Smulian

2016 expenses

\$459,948

Challah for Hunger offers inspiring proof that big change starts small: In 2004, Eli Winkelman, then a student at Scripps College, decided to bake challah with friends and sell the loaves to raise money for hunger-relief causes. Word spread and 13 years later, CfH operates 83 chapters on campuses across the U.S., Canada, and the world, including four in Los Angeles: UCLA, USC, Occidental College, and California State University at Northridge. Every CfH chapter receives ongoing support via CfH alumni turned mentors, an online resource center, and an annual summit for student leaders. Each chapter determines its own identity and expresses Judaism in its unique way, and all give half of their proceeds to local hunger organizations and half to Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger. With a special focus on L.A., CfH employs a part-time staff member to work directly with area chapters to help strengthen and expand their operations, and together with Mazon, provide advocacy workshops for student leaders.

In 2015, CfH, in partnership with Mazon, launched two new initiatives: The Campus Hunger Project and the Social Change Bakery Network. The Campus Hunger Project seeks to alleviate food insecurity among college students by working hyperlocally with undergrads to help them understand and address the issue on their own campuses. The Social Change Bakery Network brings the CfH model to people of all ages and backgrounds—and in L.A. specifically teens. CfH works with Jewish teen groups, synagogues, youth groups, and day schools to engage them in advocacy and philanthropic work through the building of Social Change Bakeries. CfH is not just helping to feed the hungry today but also spawning the entrepreneurs, advocates, and community builders of tomorrow.



Eshel exists to serve a fast-growing and very vulnerable population within Judaism: LGBTQ children from the Orthodox community. Founders Rabbi Steve Greenberg and Miryam Kabakov work to help reconcile Orthodox beliefs with LGBTQ inclusion. Together they have sensitized their staff to the nuanced needs within individual Orthodox communities, and through various programming and workshops, Eshel counsels parents and clergy on how to be supportive and inclusive. In many cases the results have turned parental—and even community-wide—shame and exclusion into fierce advocacy for inclusion and well-being.

Eshel has helped shift the national dialogue of *why* make Orthodox Judaism more inclusive for LGBTQ to *how*. Eshel's intern program—which requires each intern to innovate a unique project to help break down barriers between the Orthodox and their LGBTQ members—has proven particularly effective in using current events to advance this dialogue. After the 2016 Orlando shooting massacre at Pulse, a gay nightclub, one intern created The Good Call, a reaction campaign that encouraged leaders of Yeshiva day schools to urge Orthodox leaders to develop inclusive policies for their LGBTQ members. Today, Eshel has helped shape such policies at a number of Orthodox Jewish day schools. Eshel conducts awareness and community-building events in Los Angeles Orthodox communities, including, most recently, an allies workshop with representatives from over 10 different synagogues, camps, and schools. By 2022, Eshel plans to extend its reach to midsize cities like Cleveland and Seattle, and to bolster staff in larger cities like Philadelphia, Miami, and Chicago—helping to make LGBTQ inclusion a concern for all.

Creating Orthodox LGBTQ-inclusive communities through education and support to individuals, families, and communities; and raising awareness by igniting religious leaders and allies to make Orthodox communities welcoming places for their LGBTQ members

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board chair
Shlomo Ashkinazy

2016 expenses
\$293,000



ETTA

**Offering wraparound
services that help Jewish
adults with intellectual
and developmental
disabilities in all areas of
their lives**

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board chairs

Jay Kestenbaum
Jaime Sohacheski

2016 expenses

\$5,007,663

ETTA is the only residential opportunity in Los Angeles for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who wish to live in accordance with Jewish cultural norms. What began as a cluster of four group homes in L.A. has grown into an organization that offers culturally sensitive services to help people with disabilities attain life goals and dreams, exercise personal choice, achieve competence in day-to-day areas of life, increase independence skills, and pursue dignified relationships with family, friends, and community. Programs are designed specifically for adult Angelenos with intellectual and developmental disabilities who wish to live independently in their own residences and seek meaningful employment, and they're tailored to meet each person's specific needs. Clients range in ability from a nearly typical adult with minor disabilities to someone who needs support in absolutely every aspect of daily living. With an increasing number of intellectually and developmentally disabled adults living with their aging parents, the imperative for ETTA's services is greater than ever.

ETTA is a founding member of The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles's HaMercaz special-needs collaborative, an active participant in the Los Angeles Jewish Abilities Center, a strong collaborator with Jewish Family Services, and a partner with the new Jewish Los Angeles Special Needs Trust. Other partners include synagogues that help integrate clients into their community; NCSYs Yachad group; the Friendship Circle, which provides social programming; and day schools, which facilitate student volunteerism. Through its collaboration with Ohel Children's Home and Family Services, ETTA is now the largest social-services agency that provides residential services to Jewish adults with disabilities in the U.S. By meeting all its clients where they are, ETTA helps each one to reach greater independence, autonomy, and inclusion than ever before.

Honeymoon Israel



Honeymoon Israel organizes and subsidizes nine-day trips to the Holy Land for small groups of couples, focusing primarily on interfaith ones—a bold strategy for reaching out to the increasing number of “Jews of no religion,” who are less likely to marry Jews or raise Jewish children. Given the high rate of intermarriage, HMI recognizes the urgent need for a more inclusive approach to building Jewish community. Instead of treating intermarriage as a problem and pushing young couples away, HMI views it as a reality, without making a value judgment. Its mission is to help interfaith couples forge new, meaningful connections to Judaism and to peers from their home cities while on the trip of a lifetime. Participants reflect the diversity of young couples in North America, and every trip includes fun, adventure, Jewish ritual, volunteerism, and time for romance, to intentionally create bonds that will transfer back home.

HMI launched with 4 trips in 2015 and grew to 12 in 2016, with 25 percent of trips focused on engaging couples from L.A. Since the first trip, 60 have already participated, with 60 more scheduled for upcoming excursions. Working closely with local synagogues, HMI seeks to bring young rabbis on its trips as local educators as well as to recruit staff for the program. It also turns to these congregations to find potential applicants. Other L.A. partners include American Jewish University and its Miller program. Participants return from Israel with knowledge, inspiration, a support system, and a sense of belonging. A local HMI engagement professional, who sits as a member of the NuRoots staff team, is in place to help support this budding community. Most participants said that they thought they were getting a subsidized trip to Israel but ended up with something more valuable: their first Jewish community as a new family.

Providing trips to Israel for locally based cohorts of couples with at least one Jewish partner to create communities of couples who are committed to building families with deep and meaningful connections to Jewish life and the Jewish people

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founded
2014

board chair
Joe Kanfer

2016 expenses
\$5,614,000

06



IKAR

**Reclaiming the vitality
and relevance of Jewish
religious practice and
reimagining the contours
of Jewish community**

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founded

2004

board chair

Yoni Fife

2016 expenses

\$4,200,000

IKAR stands out for reinventing and reanimating traditional Jewish religious practice and making it relevant for the next generation. Since breaking through in 2004 as a new model of Jewish communal encounter, one that is welcoming of all denominations, the Los Angeles congregation has grown from a handful of people to a community of more than 600 member households. IKAR is not only one of the fastest-growing Jewish communities in the country, it has also earned a reputation for being among the most vibrant and dynamic. Cofounder Rabbi Sharon Brous, named the most influential rabbi in the U.S. by the Daily Beast in 2013 (and the only female rabbi to receive that honor), consistently draws large crowds to her Shabbat and High Holy services, a moving mix of music, thoughtful meditations, and modern sermons that inspire members to connect with their Jewish identity and ignite their passion to affect change in the world.

IKAR's impact reverberates throughout L.A., the U.S., and the world. With its strong emphasis on social justice as a core expression of Jewish life, IKAR engages every one of its members in justice work that is personally meaningful. IKARites teach at local underserved schools and tend a community garden that provides food to the homeless; some are involved in Innovation: Africa, which works to create sustainable communities in rural Africa with Israeli solar technology. A frequent collaborator with a number of other L.A. Jewish organizations, IKAR works with Moishe House, Eastside Jews, and similar groups in reaching out to adults in their 20s and 30s; NewGround on interfaith justice issues; and Shalhevet High School and Netiya on gardening and green education programs. It also participates in the interfaith LA Voice/PICO network. As a leader in the movement toward authentic, resonant Jewish life, IKAR is influencing the national conversation and inspiring change at synagogues, schools, and Jewish organizations around the country while changing the face of the L.A. Jewish community. Said one community member: "I have found a meaning in my life here in L.A. that I didn't know was possible."

07



InterfaithFamily began as the go-to website for “how to do Jewish,” posting stories about interfaith couples, providing resources, and maintaining a directory of interfaith-friendly organizations offering information and support for interfaith families who want to grow Jewish traditions that are comfortable for every member of the family. In 2011, IFF started to tap into the need for services beyond the keyboard and introduced rabbi-led initiatives in several major cities to encourage interfaith families to make Jewish choices and help them do so in meaningful ways that also respect the other religion in the family. These on-the-ground support networks provide interfaith couples with connections to clergy for major life events, Jewish advisors, and local Jewish community.

Each local IFF creates its own iteration of the model. In Los Angeles, IFF is focused on developing relationships, providing Jewish learning experiences for families, and advocating for increased inclusivity in the greater L.A. Jewish community. Working with organizations like Birthright Israel and PJ Library, IFF also focuses on training L.A.-based institutions and their leaders on how to be inclusive and welcoming. In 2016, IFF L.A. had over 1,000 encounters with individuals for Jewish learning and community-building experiences. Experiences like Every Generation, Every Voice, a Passover storytelling workshop with Haggadot.com; and LoveFest 2016, a citywide Tu B’Av weekend. IFF also holds regular meet-ups at locations such as L.A.’s Original Farmers Market, in space provided by Reboot. In 2017, IFF is launching the Interfaith Inclusion Leadership Initiative. It’s also developing a strategic plan to bolster its already expansive work in addressing the shifting landscape of the modern American interfaith family.

Supporting interfaith couples and families exploring Jewish life and community, and Jewish leaders and organizations that want to create comfortable spaces for them

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founded

2001

board chair

Lynda Schwartz

2016 expenses

\$3,283,579



Jewish Divorce Assistance Center (JDAC)

Providing individuals confronting the Jewish divorce process with an in-person resource center to help resolve their outstanding differences and navigate the unique challenges of a Jewish divorce

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Suite 393
Los Angeles, CA 90010

founded
2015

board chair
Chavi Hertz

2016 expenses
\$87,000

The Jewish Divorce Assistance Center (JDAC) provides in-person assistance to Orthodox Jews confronting the challenges of the Jewish divorce process in the Los Angeles area. According to Jewish law, a woman who wants to end her marriage must obtain both a civil and a Jewish divorce (called a get). If her husband refuses to issue the get, she remains trapped in a difficult situation, unable to move on with her life. JDAC unconditionally and in a timely fashion provides critical emotional support, along with the guidance, education, and resources women need to navigate the civil and rabbinical court systems to procure their freedom.

Since opening in 2015, JDAC has provided individuals and couples facing Jewish divorce with informal mediation services to help facilitate communication between parties and reach an amicable resolution to contentious issues. It also offers referrals to social workers, therapists, financial planners, attorneys, and Jewish legal experts. JDAC has been involved in 45 divorce cases, providing necessary services and, in quite a few cases, ultimately procuring a get. JDAC offers support that is free from judgment or stigma, and its professional staff is well versed in the issues relating to civil divorce and the get, and understands the emotional and logistical angst that is inherent to the process of dissolving a marriage. These essential services have helped many women on the West Coast obtain the prompt and unconditional issuance of a get, while also shifting the conversation in the Orthodox community about Jewish divorce and the harmful nature of get-refusal.

KAHAL: Your Jewish Home Abroad

Research shows that study abroad programs have more influence on a student's undergraduate life than any other college experience, and KAHAL: Your Jewish Home Abroad works to ensure that Judaism is a part of that experience. For the past four years, KAHAL has been connecting Jewish students studying abroad with families, communities, and experiences to broaden their Jewish worldview, while adding to the adventure of their time overseas. By breaking down barriers, KAHAL helps students not only stay connected with Judaism but actually deepen their identity while they are away. Partnering with Jewish campus groups like Hillel International and Chabad, KAHAL identifies outbound students and provides them with relevant connections in their temporary new homes, ensuring they have access to everything from Passover Seders to Sabbath services. Upon the students' return, KAHAL reaches out to help them reintegrate into Jewish campus life.

The program currently exists on over 20 colleges in the U.S., including nearly every campus in the Los Angeles area. It also maintains a global Jewish community spanning 67 cities in 34 countries. As a result of their association to KAHAL while overseas, 90 percent of L.A.-based students reported that they intended to get involved in their campus's Jewish community upon their return from studying abroad. KAHAL employs student interns as part of an established partnership with Hillel. These interns, who serve USC and its Orange County Center campus, seek to engage their peers in Jewish life. Additionally, at USC and UCLA, KAHAL works with local campus Hillel and Chabad houses. So far, KAHAL has connected over 2,000 Jewish students to immersive and transformative Jewish experiences abroad, and it's resonating. KAHAL-connected students develop a broader, deeper Jewish perspective, increasing their likelihood of making long-term Jewish choices.



Creating transformational Jewish experiences for study abroad students

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founded
2013

board chair
Gregg Steinberg

2016 expenses
\$310,000



The Miracle Project

**Providing a dynamic,
inclusive Jewish
community for children,
teens, and adults with
and without disabilities
through Jewish music,
dance, and theater**

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Beverly Hills, CA 90210

founded
2004

board chair
Julie Weil

2016 expenses
\$75,000

project of:
Project Miracles

parent org founded:
2011

For most people, the chance to perform onstage or in a film is a thrill. But for individuals with autism or other special needs, it can be nothing less than a revelation. Founded in 2004 in Beverly Hills, The Miracle Project provides a dynamic, inclusive Jewish community for children, teens, and adults with and without disabilities through the creation of original musical productions. The program's innovative inclusion techniques, featured in the Emmy Award-winning documentary *AUTISM: The Musical*, help each member of the troupe find his or her moment to shine. Everyone learns, grows, and shares the immense joy of creating a beautiful new experience together.

The Miracle Project offers a special theater and film program that celebrates Jewish culture through music, dance, and stories. Participants can explore their love of Torah in a warm and supportive setting, knowing they'll be heard, not judged. TMP partners with a host of Jewish organizations that benefit from its efforts. TMP has performed anti-bullying plays at local Jewish schools to foster understanding among peers, and for two years the program has partnered with the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust to show how acceptance of others is the cornerstone to building a more compassionate world. Students involved with TMP colead services at several L.A. synagogues during Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month, and in 2016 residents of Beit T'Shuvah, a Jewish drug and alcohol recovery center in L.A., began sharing their talent and volunteering in classes with TMP's young adults in what already appears to be a life-changing collaboration. TMP trains staff and religious leaders at Jewish organizations in how to create a sense of belonging for those who perceive the world differently. This, as in all of TMP's efforts, promotes its core belief in *b'tzelem Elohim*: We are all created in G-d's image.



Moishe House

In 2006, four roommates held a Shabbat dinner for more than 70 friends and friends of friends. From that homegrown beginning sprang an international movement, Moishe House—a bold idea for creating new communities of Jews and a new generation of Jewish leaders. The heart of MH's model is an open, welcoming, home-based community created and facilitated by a group of three to five young adults who plan and implement 60-plus programs a year for their friends and friends' friends. The housemates are empowered to develop each and every program, which may be a themed Shabbat, havdalah jam session, Jewish learning with a local rabbi, or a *tikkun olam* service project. (Havdalah is the religious ceremony that marks the end of Shabbat, and tikkun olam is a concept defined by acts of kindness performed to perfect or repair the world.) This peer-led approach helps young Jews redefine what community looks like in a way that resonates with them and helps deepen their commitment to Jewish life.

There are now 100 Moishe Houses in 24 countries, including 6 in the greater Los Angeles area. Since the organization opened its first L.A. house in 2009, more than 31,000 young adults have been engaged through nearly 1,800 programs, many run in partnership with various L.A. Jewish groups. MH also organizes more than 40 Learning Retreats a year, bringing together young Jews for an immersive weekend centered around a specific holiday, ritual, or practice, and in 2016 Moishe House partnered with The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles to host a retreat focused on learning and leadership. Community members of L.A. Moishe Houses report a more than 100 percent increase in feeling connected to a global Jewish community, and 71 percent of participants see the importance of living an active Jewish life. Moishe House is creating systemic change, meaningfully engaging the members of this critical demographic and inspiring residents and community members across Los Angeles to become a crucial part of the young-adult Jewish landscape.



**Empowering
twentysomethings to
creatively redefine Jewish
life for their generation
through a peer-led
model of connection
and engagement**

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founded
2006

board chair
Jim Heeger

2016 expenses
\$8,175,000



Moving Traditions

**Emboldening teens by
fostering self-discovery,
challenging sexism, and
inspiring a commitment to
Jewish life and learning**

contact

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Suite 734
Jenkintown, PA 19046

founded

2005

board chair

Sally Gottesman

2016 expenses

\$2,461,059

Moving Traditions understands that gender is a central focus of adolescence, with the pressure to conform to expectations during these coming-of-age years present in nearly every aspect of teen life. Adolescents navigate what it means to be identified as a “Jewish girl,” “Jewish boy,” or “Jewish trans youth” in a multicultural, multifait, and highly secular world. This confluence of forces combined with the fact that teens are very likely to drop out of Jewish life provides Moving Traditions and the Jewish community with the opportunity to help teens reach their full potential by connecting relevant content with enduring Jewish values and by fostering positive peer-to-peer relationships through trained adult mentors.

In Los Angeles and beyond, Moving Traditions conducts research, develops curricular resources, and trains adults who work with teens to create safe spaces where they can explore the most difficult issues they face each day in the context of enduring Jewish values, within a small community of peers. Teens are encouraged to examine the ethical choices in their lives—to stand up to those who seek to damage others, to accept new responsibilities, and sometimes to take risks and break free of expectations. In the past two years, Moving Traditions has trained 49 Jewish educators and engaged 850 Jewish teens in the greater Los Angeles area, and it partners with 23 L.A.-based institutions to deliver programs to its teen constituents. Moving Traditions continuously responds to the changing social issues in teens’ lives—updating the Rosh Hodesh (the beginning of each month in the Jewish calendar marked by a special ritual) curriculum to reflect the world teen girls live in today, developing new material to address sexualization and to help them build a healthy sexuality, and creating a new, online program for transgender and gender. In addition, it is debuting a b’nai mitzvah program. Moving Traditions is powered by a belief that when Judaism promotes self-discovery, challenges traditional gender roles, and celebrates a diversity of voices, it has the ability to move teens, communities, and Judaism forward.



Forget about turning lemons into lemonade—how about turning concrete into carrots? By building gardens on the land of its partners, Netiya is galvanizing the Los Angeles faith-based community around two common issues: food insecurity and rising rates of childhood obesity. Founded in 2011 as a food and faith network, Netiya now works with more than 70 local faith institutions to increase access to healthy food and to educate through workshops designed to teach participants about healthy food production, harvesting, cooking, and preserving. Netiya believes that food relief efforts must be complemented by strategic efforts to build food sovereignty: the ability of people to define their own food system and have access to healthy food that is grown through environmentally sustainable methods. Through its partnerships with a range of regional faith institutions—spanning geographic, economic, social, and racial differences—Netiya gives these community anchors the tools, seed capital, and access to land they need to grow healthy crops in order to foster a more food-secure Los Angeles.

Currently serving communities in the North East Valley and in South L.A., Netiya has installed 16 institutional-scale gardens, including 8 at Jewish institutions, and conducted over 160 workshops. In addition, Netiya has awarded 14 matching microgrants to faith-based institutions to help them showcase food production on their campuses. Because of Netiya's efforts, more than 14 acres of underused land have become fruit-bearing orchards, in-ground vegetable gardens, and irrigated raised vegetable beds. Netiya's impact is also felt across the country: It consults and teaches on Jewish faith traditions of land stewardship and earth-based wisdom through gardening at schools and congregations nationwide; its executive director gave a keynote at the Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative; and it led 16 other organizations at the annual national Jewish farmers gathering at the Leichtag Foundation in Encinitas, California.

Fostering institutional-scale repair of the food system while mitigating food insecurity by engaging people in L.A.'s faith centers to grow food for and with people in their communities

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Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

founded
2011

board chair
Rabbi Adam M. Allenberg

2016 expenses
\$122,993



**Transforming
communities through the
power of relationships**

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906D
Los Angeles, CA 90017

founded

2006

board chair

David Weiner

2016 expenses

\$339,383

NewGround: A Muslim-Jewish Partnership for Change

Conflict may be inevitable, but it's not intractable. This guiding principle fuels NewGround: A Muslim-Jewish Partnership for Change, a model for healthy relations, productive engagement, and social change between American Muslims and Jews. Based in Los Angeles, NewGround envisions an America where Muslims and Jews are empowered to create lasting partnerships and engage in authentic communication and mutual cooperation. NewGround empowers Jewish and Muslim change makers with the skills, resources, and relationships they need to improve Muslim-Jewish relations and strengthen cooperation on issues of shared concern. Through a professional fellowship, high school leadership council, and innovative public programming, NewGround impacts a broad political and religious spectrum of Muslims, Jews, and institutions.

NewGround's methodology is unique in the way it works toward a long-term goal while having an immediate impact on the larger communal landscape. This strategy allows for sustained engagement that equips parties to navigate the inevitable conflicts that arise. Fellows participate in an eight-month program designed to help them build authentic personal relationships while they gain a deeper understanding of themselves, of people within their faith, and of those of other faith traditions. After the program concludes, alumni build upon those relationships and values by planning and implementing large-scale Muslim-Jewish projects, partnering with communal organizations. NewGround's 150-person (and growing!) alumni network mobilizes during moments of heightened tension to quietly diffuse conflict behind the scenes. Through public programming, alumni projects, and partnerships with more than 40 Muslim and Jewish organizations in Los Angeles, it has reached over 10,000 people. NewGround has been recognized by Harvard's Pluralism Project, the office of California Governor Jerry Brown, and the White House; and helps the city of Los Angeles with its strategy for Muslim and Jewish community engagement, truly transforming communities through the power of relationships.

15



NuRoots is committed to broadening the definition of what it means to be “Jewish” and to give young people the tools and community they need to make Judaism a central tenet of their lives. Operating from a place of compassion rather than worry and fear, NuRoots is able to engage millennial Jews through the exploration of interfaith marriage, nontraditional spirituality, and ever-changing modalities of community building. NuRoots empowers small teams of trained fellows as network weavers to build relationships with young unengaged Jews and connect them with others, introducing them to local Jewish events and experiences. The fellows are Jewish professionals who have been social workers, music managers, marketing professionals, and lawyers—all with a host of other interests and talents as well.

NuRoots Fellows identify their constituents by focusing on geographic microcommunities, hosting challah-baking workshops, cooking classes, and yoga and meditation groups. The effect is organic, synergistic community building and identity exploration that creates strong Jewish roots. Through its engagement-first approach to Jewish programming, NuRoots has touched the lives of 1,965 young people in the few years since its founding, bringing many from the fringes back into Jewish life. Seventy percent of NuRoots constituent respondents say they are interested in exploring more ways to get involved in Jewish activities, proving that this approach to youth outreach resonates with its target audience. NuRoots hopes to expand into more cities and to begin engaging with older demographic groups as well.

Supporting young adults in creating Jewish connections that match their interests and lifestyles, helping them build meaningful communities on their own terms

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founded

2014

board chair

Orna Wolens

2016 expenses

\$1,220,890

project of

The Jewish Federation of
Greater Los Angeles

parent org founded

1911



Open Temple

Engaging the Jewishly curious in their 20s and 30s—and those who love them—through cutting-edge creative ritual portals of living Judaism that re-enchant 21st-century Jewish life

contact

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opentemple.org

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1422 Electric Avenue
Venice, CA 90291

founded

2012

board chair

Nikki Lebow

2016 expenses

\$260,000

In 2012, four families sought a personalized Torah education for their children with consideration for their needs as intermarried families from an international background and a sense of fun. The result of that effort was Open Temple, which continues to grow today. This emerging community in Venice hopes to inspire individuals and families toward a life of Jewish curiosity, creativity, and critical thought while re-enchanting and reinvigorating them to live more meaningful, connected, and purposeful lives. Open Temple aims to revitalize Jewish practice in surprising and creative ways for the 21st-century seeker.

Open Temple offers a version of Jewish life that is infused with the spirit, culture, and offerings of its local Los Angeles community. This includes the recently established Open Temple House, a center for creative Jewish spirituality that serves musicians, performers, and any other seekers. The house is a site for weekly Shabbat dinners; headquarters for the Creative Torah Academy, a bar and bat mitzvah school; and a meeting ground for cross-denominational partnerships and classes. The community's radically inclusive yet familiar monthly Shabbat services take place all over the city: in a solar-powered black-box theater, in a dance studio, at the beach, or even on bicycles. Open Temple's interpretations of ritual are based on arts and culture, with no barriers to entry, and they take full advantage of local offerings around them—for example, a trip to a Korean spa to chant Psalm 27 in a sauna or using the Pacific Ocean as a mikveh on Erev Yom Kippur. Open Temple is spearheading a new way for young Jews to reimagine familiar traditions as they explore Judaism through the playful landscape of its Venice Beach artistic and cultural center.

Partners in Prevention



What's the best way to keep young people from taking dangerous risks or acting self-destructively? Stop them before they start. Partners in Prevention is a reverse-engineering approach to the growing problem of self-destructive behaviors afflicting youth. The program, a project of Los Angeles-based Beit T'Shuvah, utilizes the path of Jewish spirituality to promote self-acceptance, self-worth, spiritual values, and family harmony, working to head off drug and alcohol abuse and other unsafe behaviors and helping vulnerable youth learn positive ways to cope with daily stress and anxiety. Using games, exercises, and personal experiences, Partners in Prevention encourages open discussion between parents and children about life's pressures and the relentless pursuit of perfection. Children and teens share personal stories about the pressures they face and explore their feelings; in response, leaders use the spiritual lessons of Judaism to help participants understand how to face the problems ahead.

In dealing with the problem of addiction, the U.S. government still directs the vast majority of its funding toward "scared straight" interventions, but new research shows that actually the most important factors protecting youth against addiction are strong family connections, religious participation, and stress reduction. Last year, almost 3,500 children and teens and 250 parents participated in Partners in Prevention programs at more than 50 Jewish venues around the country, with over half of the participating venues located in the greater Los Angeles community. By defying convention and testing out new strategies to help struggling young people feel understood and supported, Partners in Prevention points the way to a more empowered future.

Providing emotional and spiritual healing to individuals and families with addictive and behavioral disorders—and providing young people with the spiritual tools to avoid these self-destructive behaviors in the first place

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Los Angeles, CA 90034

founded

2004

board chair

Russell Kern

2016 expenses

\$234,030

project of

Beit T'Shuvah

parent org founded

1987



Persian Pride @ JQ International

**Destigmatizing and
normalizing LGBTQ
identity in the Persian
Jewish community
through innovative,
culturally relevant
programming paired
with unprecedented
support services**

contact

Asher Gellis

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founded

2015

board chair

Todd Shotz

2016 expenses

\$31,500

project of

JQ International

parent org founded

2004

JQ International provides a safe environment for identity building within the Jewish LGBTQ community, wherever members are in their lives and whatever the nature of their Jewish beliefs. JQI established Persian Pride, a first-of-its-kind haven for Persian (Iranian) LGBTQ, a triple minority that is often marginalized and shunned by its community of origin. Persian Jews are similar to the Orthodox in their conservative values, particularly when it comes to alternative sexuality. And then, even when the family embraces its LGBTQ child or relative, the larger community may not, which can ostracize an entire family system. Los Angeles is home to the largest Persian Jewish community in the U.S. and as such is the perfect place to incubate this initiative, which is unlike any other.

In its short life span, Persian Pride has designed an array of inclusive activities that celebrate both Persian and Jewish culture in a warm and nurturing environment as it seeks to build a unique community in Los Angeles. JQI holds monthly Shabbat dinners, as well as organizes an annual Persian New Year Party (Norooz) and Fall Festival of the Harvest (Mehregan). It also partners with local organizations, including the Cross Cultural Expressions Community Counseling Center, which serves the Persian community, and the City of West Hollywood, which sponsored JQI's Out of Iran, Out of the Closet panel. The standing-room-only event marked the first time a sitting U.S. official addressed Iranian LGBTQ issues. A formal partner of The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, Persian Pride is the only nonprofit devoted to helping Persian LGBTQ. With L.A. having the largest population of Persian Jews in the U.S., there is no better place for this groundbreaking, critical work.

Reboot

Reboot seeks to affirm the vital importance of Jewish traditions and proposes new ways for people to make these rituals, holidays, and ideas their own. Its Rebooters are among the most influential Jewish creatives in America, fascinated by the arts, food, philosophy, and social justice issues, and dedicated to forging new Jewish connections to these topics. Since its founding in 2001, Reboot has grown to include over 540 network members and 915 organizational partners, all turning out provocative and relevant Jewish projects: events, exhibitions, books, recordings, films, and a wide array of digital participation programs and do-it-yourself tool kits. These have reached an audience of hundreds of thousands of people, mostly in their 20s and 30s, many of them pulled in from the margins of Jewish life by the force of Reboot's tremendous energy.

In Los Angeles, Reboot creates a variety of ongoing events and experiences that range from community wide to intimate, and partners with over 100 local organizations. Reboot is a regular partner of UNPLUG LA with Digital Detox, an organization committed to programming focused on turning off technological devices and connecting with the world around you, and Open Temple, a Jewish community in Venice. Together with one of its projects, Beyond Bubbie, an interactive community cooking site serving as a place to share stories and memories connected to recipes, Reboot hosted over 100 people at a make-your-own-haroseth bar during Silverlake JCC's pre-Seder happy hour. In 2016, Reboot engaged 4,426 participants through attendance at 85 live events, and 11,600 unique web users from the Los Angeles area visited its program websites. Reboot's commitment to providing tools, not rules, and its low barriers to entry to create new takes on Jewish ritual, holidays, and ideas help enable it to bring many more young Jews into its remarkable circle of inventiveness.



Reimagining Jewish lives full of meaning, creativity, and joy—through intimate and community-wide events and exhibitions, recordings, books, films, and a wide array of digital participation programs and tools

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founded

2001

board chair

Kay Sarlin Wright

2016 expenses

\$2,295,755

20



The Righteous Conversations Project

Facilitating dialogue and social action as well as collaborative film, music, and other creative work to connect students with Holocaust survivors

contact

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address

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founded

2011

board chairs

Eva Brettler
Michele Rodri

2016 expenses

\$265,000

project of

Remember Us

parent org founded

2007

The Righteous Conversations Project partners with schools and synagogues throughout Los Angeles to bring teens together with an ever-shrinking population of Holocaust survivors to form a connection, learn their stories, and play a role in preserving their legacy for the next generation. During the RCP's collaborative workshops, teens and survivors participate together in various activities, such as baking hamantaschen or the sharing of a meaningful object; and they talk not just about the Holocaust but also about social injustices that exist in today's world. Under the guidance of filmmakers- and artist-mentors, the students capture survivors' personal testimonies in powerful short films, public service announcements, and other artistic projects designed to highlight any number of social justice issues.

RCP's workshops have a transformative effect on both the teens and the survivors. Students have the opportunity to gain a deep understanding of the Holocaust as they hear the survivors' stories of resiliency and courage firsthand and are empowered to raise their own voices; survivors are enriched by the experience of connecting with the teens, learning about the issues they care about, and seeing their creative work. These conversations don't just stay in the room: Films and PSAs created in RCP workshops are shared with the world on social media and at film festivals around the U.S.; the PSAs are gifted to organizations working for the causes represented in the films. At this time in Holocaust history, the need for preserving and perpetuating survivor testimony has never been more imperative. RCP has stepped up to do this important work, while offering an inspiring example of how to make these stories and remembrances resonate with the next generation.

The Sanctuary @ Pico Union Project

“Love your neighbor as you want to be loved” is the core principle of The Sanctuary @ Pico Union Project, a spiritual community in Los Angeles dedicated both to stimulating Jewish life in L.A. and supporting its local community. The Sanctuary resides in one of the oldest synagogues in L.A., but its community is newly coalescing and its programming is experimental. The Sanctuary uses spirituality, arts, and community activism as pathways to deepen Jewish identity and to widen perspectives around other religious and cultural groups. Residing in a multifaith, multicultural center, The Sanctuary is located in a socioeconomically disadvantaged neighborhood of L.A. The organization believes that engaging with the local community and getting to know its neighbors allows Judaism to be perceived as a way to enhance your life and as a thread that pulls your whole being together.

This no-membership, no-affiliation community runs three events per month, with attendance ranging from 50 to 350 people. It places a high premium on partnership, and most programs are cosponsored by other Los Angeles-based organizations. Each program strives to bring the culture and climate of L.A. into it and uses song, story, prayer, dance, food, art, and community service to create a robust programmatic calendar that includes yoga, High Holiday services, and a local job and education fair. Additionally, The Sanctuary @ Pico Union Project has taken on the responsibility of physically beautifying the area around the synagogue and currently cares for 4 blocks of downtown L.A., with the goal of expanding to 10 blocks in the coming years. L.A. is just the beginning for The Sanctuary, which hopes to serve as a model organization for other Jewish communities, using its hyperlocal, consumer-focused approach as a way to create an umbrella organization committed to its founding principle of loving your neighbors as you want to be loved.



A core part of a multifaith, multicultural center and a provider of space to honor, explore, and celebrate a diverse range of Jewish expression through spirituality, arts, and community activism

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picounionproject.org

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Los Angeles, CA 90015

founded
2015

board chair
Ellen Silverman

2016 expenses
\$325,000



Sharsheret

**Supporting, educating,
and empowering all
young Jewish women and
families living with or at
increased genetic risk for
breast or ovarian cancer**

contact

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website

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twitter

@sharsheret

address

1086 Teaneck Road
Suite 2G
Teaneck, NJ 07666

founded

2001

board chair

Dr. Dalia Shoretz Nagel

2016 expenses

\$2,600,000

Sharsheret supports women in the U.S. who are predisposed to or have been diagnosed with breast or ovarian cancer. By connecting these women and their families to a community of educators, medical professionals, and survivors who can help them make informed decisions about their medical care, Sharsheret is in the unique position to embrace them when they are sick, scared, or both. With 12 support and education programs, Sharsheret is working to shift the primary focus of breast cancer detection from self-exams and mammograms to family history of the disease, and since 2001, it has served more than 63,000 women nationwide, swathing them in both hope and comfort.

In 2016, Sharsheret opened its second regional office, in Los Angeles, to be an on-the-ground presence addressing the urgent concerns and critical needs of the local Jewish community. California has one of the highest incidence rates of breast cancer nationwide and one of the largest Jewish populations in the U.S., making it a prime location for Sharsheret to expand its local efforts. Although many individuals with breast or ovarian cancer have great medical teams, they often lack the psychosocial support of those who share their cultural background and understand exactly what they are going through. Sharsheret LA brings support services, education, and outreach to the community and serves as the first point of contact for local Jewish women and families affected by breast or ovarian cancer, helping them receive personalized support and resources. In its first three months, it reached and connected with more than 3,600 community members, coordinated nearly 20 education and outreach events, and enrolled 330 young women in the Sharsheret Peer Support Network, to help those newly diagnosed or facing breast or ovarian cancer over the phone, through email, and in person. In response to this high demand, Sharsheret hired additional staff, making it an even more welcoming space for bringing women into the larger Sharsheret community.

Silverlake Independent Jewish Community Center



What could be more fun than traipsing around downtown Los Angeles on a tasting spree of the city's best pastrami? Or having a communal Shabbat dinner at a different restaurant each month? Or attending an art show of your friends and neighbors? Pastronomy, Last Sabbath, and Culture Lab are just a few of the offbeat adventures offered by the Silverlake Independent JCC. Silver Lake is one of L.A.'s fastest-growing and most vibrant neighborhoods, situated on the sprawling city's east side and home to a dynamic Jewish community that insists on a creative approach to Judaism. The SIJCC's success is rooted in its innovative "bottom-up" approach to programming, all of it developed in response to what the community has expressed it needs. From its earliest days, SIJCC has been community driven, its board comprised of vested individuals, many of whom have no previous board experience but who are committed to Jewish life in Silver Lake. "East Side Jews," as the SIJCC's adult cohort is known, is a tightly knit group of innovators who together have become a strong voice in the national conversation about Jewish life in the 21st century.

The SIJCC is home to The Box, a 4,000-square-foot performance forum; The Studio, a yoga and meditation space; and The Workshop, a small meeting, coworking, and event area. Last year's offerings included a Hootenanny, an open jam session featuring local musicians Days of Awesome, a twist on the High Holy Days that included apple and honey tastings, and its first-ever Yom Kippur experience—which attracted 360 "friends," many of whom made the occasion their sole High Holy Day activity. The SIJCC's Jewish Learning Center features an optional bar or bat mitzvah track with more than 160 students partaking. The SIJCC makes Judaism fun and meaningful, clearing the path back to Jewish spirituality for a generation looking for a new way to come home.

The leading center for Jewish education, arts, and culture on the east side of Los Angeles

contact

Ayana Morse

email

info@sijcc.net

phone

323-663-2255

websites

sijcc.net
eastsidejews.com

address

1110 Bates Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029

founded

2002

board chair

Micah Fitzerman-Blue

2016 expenses

\$2,030,182



theatre dybbuk

**Creating pathways
for connection to the
world and each other
through provocative
world-premiere theatrical
productions and
innovative educational
opportunities**

contact

Aaron Henne

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phone

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website

theatredybbuk.org

twitter

@theatredybbuk

address

PO Box 292576
Los Angeles, CA 90029

founded

2011

board chair

David Aaronson

2016 expenses

\$228,200

Theatre dybbuk aims for nothing less than to illuminate the human condition. Its astonishing theatrical presentations and workshops transform Jewish folklore, rituals, and history into artistic interpretation of what it means to be alive today. Synagogues, educational organizations, and cultural institutions partner with theatre dybbuk to teach and discover Jewish content in fresh, appealing, and surprising ways. Based in Los Angeles, theatre dybbuk currently works with 21 local Jewish institutions, including six religious schools and five college Hillels. For all involved, the theatre dybbuk experience becomes a catalyst for conversation and understanding. Since its founding in 2011, the organization has presented four full productions, all of which were developed in L.A. Each production reached more than 1,000 and employed more than 30 local artists per show in different geographic locations throughout the city.

Its most recent work was *exagoge*, a world-premiere adaptation of the first recorded Jewish play—a drama on the theme of the Jewish exodus from Egypt, written in Alexandria probably during the second century BCE. Composer Michael Jay Skloff, who contributed to the creation of *exagoge*, said: “One of the reasons I’m drawn to theatre dybbuk as an artist and as a progressive Jew is that they strive to wrestle with and challenge our perceptions of Jewish history, and the exposed issues echo further out into the global human experience.” For *exagoge*, theatre dybbuk teamed up with an inner-city youth choir and brought 30 actors, singers, and designers to a synagogue, a public park, and a museum amphitheater at UCLA. Next up: a production based on the lost tribes of Israel that will tour the country—a first for the theater—and include narratives from nondominant communities in each city. As with everything theatre dybbuk creates, it promises to build a deeper understanding of Jewish history, tradition, and community in all those who see it.

YidLife Crisis

YidLife Crisis is barely three years old, yet already it has helped to revitalize the ancient language of Yiddish. With their hipster high jinks and irreverent humor, actor Jamie Elman and YidLife Crisis's executive director, Eli Batalion, have bridged the centuries by ushering Yiddish into contemporary life. Through YouTube video shorts, social media, and live performances, the comedy duo addresses every relevant Jewish subject imaginable—circumcision, interfaith relationships, and breaking the fast to name a few—and shatters some taboos along the way. To celebrate Christmas and Hanukkah falling on the same day in 2016, Elman and Batalion donned ugly Hanukkah sweaters, set a piano in front of a fireplace adorned with Christmas lights, and sang classic Christmas carols in Yiddish.

YidLife Crisis is inspiring Jews and non-Jews alike and is contributing to an understanding of Jewish culture within the non-Jewish world. YidLife Crisis's content is clickbait for viewers who aren't necessarily searching for Jewish material but are happy to discover it along the way. It's how the creators have developed a cult following among what they call an "increasingly fragmented, multidevice and multiscreen audience." Based in Los Angeles, the capital of content creation, YidLife Crisis aims to enlist local content-creating talent to produce videos and written material. In addition, it has worked with Yiddishkayt, East Side Jews/Silverlake JCC, and The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles to produce live engagement events for the L.A. community. Through its partnerships with Jewish artists and celebrities, YidLife Crisis hopes to grow into a Jewish comedy content studio and evolve into the Jewish version of the popular comedy video website Funny or Die.



A Jewish identity content brand that produces and distributes original Yiddish content meant to connect and reconnect audiences with Judaism through the Trojan horse of comedy

contact
Eli Batalion

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info@yidlifecrisis.com

phone
514-893-4401

website
yidlifecrisis.com

twitter
[@yidlifecrisis](https://twitter.com/yidlifecrisis)

address
3011 La Paz
Los Angeles, CA 90039

founded
2014

board chair
Justin Korda

2016 expenses
\$200,000

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Moishe House
NewGround: A Muslim-Jewish Partnership for Change
NuRoots
Open Temple
Reboot
The Sanctuary @ Pico Union Project
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ETTA

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Legacy

ETTA
InterfaithFamily
Partners in Prevention
Reboot

Annual Expenses

< \$100,000

Jewish Divorce Assistance Center of Los Angeles (JDAC)
The Miracle Project
Persian Pride @ JQ International

\$100,001 — \$200,000

30 Years After
Netiya

\$200,001 — \$500,000

Challah for Hunger
Eshel
KAHAL: Your Jewish Home Abroad
NewGround: A Muslim-Jewish Partnership for Change
Open Temple
Partners in Prevention
The Righteous Conversations Project
The Sanctuary @ Pico Union Project
theatre dybbuk
YidLife Crisis

\$1,000,001 — \$3,000,000

Moving Traditions
NuRoots
Reboot
Sharsheret
Silverlake Independent Jewish Community Center

\$3,000,001 +

Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice
ETTA
Honeymoon Israel
IKAR
InterfaithFamily
Moishe House

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the 26 organizations profiled in this guide and to the hundreds of exciting projects that applied for inclusion in *Slingshot 2017*. We are privileged to consider you our colleagues and are inspired by your devotion to ensuring that the North American Jewish community continues to thrive. Thank you to the next-generation members of the Slingshot Fund, who spent many months engaged in a collective giving process to support innovative Jewish organizations. These members have provided the original inspiration for this guide and continually drive its production. Our gratitude also goes to the panel of professional evaluators that select the organizations featured in *Slingshot*. Without them, this guide would not exist. Thank you to all of our funders, families, and friends who help to make Slingshot possible.

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Leadership

Slingshot is guided by a board of directors without whom *Slingshot 2017*, the Slingshot Fund, and our annual community gathering, Slingshot Day, would not be possible. Their commitment to supporting innovation in Jewish life provides great hope for our collective future.

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Debra Hokin

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Coby Lerner

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Dan Rueven

Lana Volftsun

Jenna Weinberg

Investors

Slingshot would like to thank the following investors, whose commitment to the next generation of Jewish life is expressed through support of Slingshot. We are grateful to each of you for your vision and support during the past 12 years.

21/64

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Thank you to our wonderful team of evaluators who helped to assemble *Slingshot 2017*. These evaluators lent extraordinary analytical skills, sector expertise, and valuable time to assist in the near impossible task of choosing the most innovative projects in Jewish life. Their commitment ensures that *Slingshot* features organizations that inspire us all and play an important role in shaping the future of Jewish life.

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Shana Zions

What is Slingshot?

The core of the idea that became *Slingshot* developed organically following a 2003 weekend retreat for a dozen young Jews who were preparing to become involved in their families' philanthropic efforts. Participants wanted to learn how to navigate the alphabet soup of the Jewish community and sort out which organizations resonated with themselves and their peers. *Slingshot: A Resource Guide to Jewish Innovation* was launched shortly after as a Zagat-style guidebook to highlight the most innovative nonprofits in North America each year.

What is the Slingshot Fund?

In 2007 the same next-generation funders who created *Slingshot* launched the Slingshot Fund, a yearly, communal giving circle open to next-gen funders. Together, Slingshot Fund members pool their funds, review proposals, conduct site visits, and make allocation decisions. Being part of the Slingshot Fund offers members opportunities to connect with peers, explore Jewish interests, find causes that are meaningful to their own identities and experiences, and hone leadership skills.

Why should I join the Slingshot Fund 2017?

The Slingshot Fund offers grant-making training to next-generation funders across the country. Members may join to build relationships with other funders in their 20s and 30s, explore the Jewish not-for-profit world, learn more about grant making, or simply have philanthropic experiences independent of their families. There is no one-size-fits-all reason for joining, but if you are interested in having a peer grant-making experience, leveraging your giving, joining a community of next-gen philanthropists, receiving grant-making training, or learning about cutting-edge Jewish organizations across North America, the Slingshot Fund may be right for you.

How does the Slingshot Fund work?

All organizations featured in *Slingshot* in a given year are eligible to apply for a Slingshot Fund grant. Slingshot Fund members pool their donations and spend five months determining group values, examining proposals, conducting site visits, and selecting grantees whose organizations not only fit their designated criteria but also resonate with a next-generation audience.

Grand Street

The idea for *Slingshot* and the Slingshot Fund has evolved through the Grand Street network. Grand Street is a meeting place for young Jews (18 to 28 years old) who are involved or will be involved as leaders in their families' philanthropic efforts. Beginning in 2002 with 12 people meeting for a weekend to ask their own questions, Grand Street seeks to develop a Jewish philanthropic analysis and capacity for strategic thinking, as well as to create a space where members can pursue personal development and build a network of peers in similar positions of philanthropic responsibility. A new cohort of 12 individuals is added each year.

Some participants are in college or have recently graduated, some have already assumed roles within their families' foundations, and many others are just becoming aware of those imminent responsibilities. All feel alone in being young and associated with philanthropic wealth. Many struggle with allocating, or planning to allocate, money while also seeking to reconcile their personal passions with their families' interests, both Jewish and universal.

2164.net/we-offer/convening

Courtney Mizel



Emanuel J. Friedman

PHILANTHROPIES

EJF Philanthropies has four grantmaking priorities: improving pediatric health in the Washington DC region, increasing opportunities for students in District of Columbia schools, promoting compassion and protection for animals, and collaborating with other funders to create vibrant Jewish life in the United States. For more information please visit: ejfphilanthropies.org

DIANE & GUILFORD

GLAZER

PHILANTHROPIES

Diane and Guilford Glazer Philanthropies aim to promote the wellbeing of Jewish people throughout the world, with a focus on the Greater Los Angeles area, Israel, Jewish continuity, and intergroup relationship building. For more information please visit: glazerphilanthropies.org

THE FOUNDATION

JEWISH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
LOS ANGELES

Established in 1954, the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles manages more than \$1 billion of assets entrusted to it by over 1,300 families. The Foundation partners with donors to shape meaningful philanthropic strategies, magnify the impact of giving, and build enduring charitable legacies. Over the past 25 years, The Foundation has distributed over \$1 billion in grants to thousands of nonprofits across a diverse spectrum. For more information please visit: jewishfoundationla.org

