

Here for Good

2026 CANVASSER GUIDE



Here for Good

2026 Annual Community Campaign

JewishOttawa.com

Thank You!

Built on our past, committed to today, Federation is Here for Good.

The **Jewish Federation of Ottawa's 2026 Annual Campaign** is guided by our new five-year strategic plan and the vision that we are *Here for Good*, ensuring that Jewish Ottawa is vibrant, secure, and enduring, for today and generations to come.

Being **Here for Good** means we are:

- **Ensuring Jewish Life for All** by caring for the vulnerable, supporting those in need, sustaining our schools and synagogues, making kosher food accessible, and safeguarding community security.
- **Inspiring Jewish Connections** by fostering pride and belonging through cultural programs, grassroots initiatives, leadership development, and meaningful encounters with Israel.
- **Securing Our Jewish Future** by investing in leadership, combating antisemitism, preserving our cultural legacy, and strengthening institutions so they are ready for tomorrow.

This vision is anchored in Federation's role as **catalyst, connector, and convener**. We spark ideas and action, bring people and organizations together, and link our community to opportunities in Ottawa, Israel, and around the world.

Canvassers are the driving force of the Annual Campaign. Your time, passion, and commitment ensure that Federation is truly *Here for Good*. **Thank you** for helping to build a stronger Jewish future.

"If a person convinces others to give, the reward is even greater than when simply giving by oneself."

Talmud, Baba Batra, 9A

Campaign 2026 top items to know

The messaging:

The 2026 Annual Community Campaign theme is **Here for Good**. This means we're committed to the long-term strength and resilience of Jewish Ottawa. Through every challenge and every opportunity, the Jewish Federation of Ottawa is here to lead, support, and grow our community, now and for generations to come.

It also means we're here **to do good**, to care for the vulnerable, to inspire deep and lasting Jewish connections, to fight antisemitism, and to build a more inclusive, more vibrant Jewish future.

The three pillars of the Community Campaign:

Ensuring Jewish Life

Federation strengthens the core of Jewish life in Ottawa, from education and ritual to security and compassionate care.

We safeguard our schools and synagogues, support vulnerable community members, and fight antisemitism, ensuring that every Jew can live proudly and safely, regardless of age, background, or geography.

Inspiring Jewish Connections

Federation fosters belonging in a fractured world. Through grassroots programs, cultural celebrations, and meaningful partnerships, we're uniting newcomers and long-time residents, young adults and seniors, interfaith families and everyone in between — all woven into the diverse, evolving tapestry of Jewish Ottawa.

Securing Our Jewish Future

Federation works to guarantee that our most powerful investment is in what comes next.

We empower future leaders, support immersive Jewish experiences, and modernize the ways we give, lead, and engage. From toddlers to teens to tomorrow's changemakers, we're building a sustainable future for every generation.

Federation's Unique Role:

The Jewish Federation of Ottawa is the only charity exclusively dedicated to strengthening Jewish life and ensuring the future of the Jewish people — in Ottawa, in Israel, and around the world. While there are many worthy charities, none play the unique and irreplaceable role of Federation.

The morning after October 7, when our community was in shock and grief, it was Federation that people called. Our community knows that Federation is the umbrella organization, the leader, and the trusted place to turn in times of crisis. As the **catalyst, convener, and connector**, we respond when it matters most.

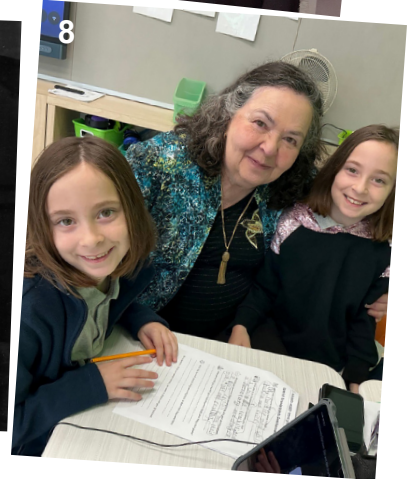
We fulfill this role in three essential ways:

1. Community-wide reach. The Annual Campaign allocations benefit more than 50 organizations across every area of Jewish life: caring for the vulnerable, combating antisemitism, providing Jewish education, supporting Israel, and more. By funding and working with dozens of institutions here and worldwide, Federation has built an unparalleled network that can be mobilized to tackle big challenges in a coordinated way.

2. Comprehensive strategy. While many organizations address single issues, only Federation works across the full spectrum of community needs. We take a holistic approach, informed by research and by a 360-degree understanding of our diverse and evolving community.

3. Rapid response. With the rise in antisemitism, war in Israel, and global instability, our reach and expertise enable us to act decisively. We saw this after October 7, when Federation quickly mobilized to support Israel, convened the community, increased local security, and pressed political leaders to act. This same capacity for rapid response has guided us through the pandemic, the Ukraine refugee crisis, and ongoing threats to Jewish life.

Built on our past, committed to today, Federation is Here for Good.



Faces of Campaign 2026:

1) **Alex Polowin** and sister **Sheila Polowin Hammer**, 1942, in front of York St. school. Alex Polowin is in his World War II Navy uniform.

2) **Saul Davidson** enjoying a strawberry picking field trip with AJA 50+, summer 2025.

3) **Rabbi Reuven Bulka** speaking to a crowd at a Freedom Rally in Ottawa for Soviet Jewry, 1970s.

4) **Ottawa March of the Living** participants at Auschwitz, spring 2025.

5) **Joannie Caplan** (Joan Gluck) in her back yard at age 3, ca.1938.

6) **J-Fellow** participants at the inaugural Dorot reception, May 2025.

7) **Mr. Herman Roodman** presents prizes to children at Chanukah celebration with Brenda Torontow (Saxe), Hannah Kapeller, Lloyd Rosman, 1950s.

8) **OJCS** students with their grandparent, 2025.

Five Steps for a more successful canvass

Canvassing is about building relationships. The best relationships and connections are made in person. Bring meaning to your canvasses and help maximize results.

1. **Face-to-face canvassing:** This remains the best way to ask for a gift.

The most powerful way to ask for a gift is face-to-face. Nothing replaces the warmth, trust, and connection that comes from meeting in person. Whenever possible, make the effort to sit down with someone. This shows respect, builds relationships, and often leads to the most meaningful conversations.

If an in-person meeting is not possible, video conferencing is the next best option. Zoom, Teams, or FaceTime still allow you to connect in real time and share the passion behind the Campaign. Phone calls are also effective, especially when paired with a quick email in advance to let someone know you'll be reaching out. Many canvassers have found success by sending a short note, such as "I'll be calling tomorrow to connect about the Community Campaign." This sets the stage for a positive, receptive conversation.

2. **Show your appreciation**

- A "thank you" is the best way to start a conversation.
- Be sincere and clear — thank them for meeting with you, thank them for their time and thank them for their gift.
- End with a "thank you" — every donor should feel our gratitude (regardless of the outcome)!

3. **Find the donor's passion**

- Making a connection so that you build a personal relationship with each donor.
- Know how to share your story and passion – look for the right moments and opportunities, and remember it is ultimately about helping the donor find THEIR passion. Try and get the donor to share their story.

4. **Know before you go**

- Make your own gift first — lead by example.
- Do your homework: review the donor's pledge card so you know their history. For example, did they donate to the Emergency Campaign or the Ukraine Relief Fund?
- Read this guide, and the Canvasser Portal web page, and become familiar with the goals.
- Ask an experienced canvasser, team captain or staff member for advice — they are here to help.
- Think through what an appropriate gift might be from the donor and listen carefully to how they are doing.

5. **Learn to listen ... listen to learn**

- The best canvassers do more listening and less talking.
- Listening lets you find out what the donor is passionate about.
- Use active listening — ask follow-up questions.
- Once you have made an ask, say nothing. Wait for the speaker to reply (even if there is an awkward pause).

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Federation and why give to Federation?

The **Jewish Federation of Ottawa** is the only charity exclusively dedicated to strengthening Jewish life and supporting the Jewish people, locally, in Israel, and around the world. Guided by our new strategic plan, Federation is the catalyst that sparks action, the convener that brings people and organizations together, and the connector that links our community to opportunities and resources at home and abroad.

When you give to Federation, you are investing in more than one cause. You are supporting a comprehensive network that sustains Jewish life every day and can also mobilize immediately in times of crisis. Whether it is combating antisemitism in Ottawa, securing our schools and synagogues, providing aid to Israel during war, or responding to global challenges such as the Ukraine refugee crisis, Federation's reach and expertise make it the most effective way to strengthen the Jewish community, now and for generations to come.

In short:

- Federation is the only charity fully dedicated to strengthening Jewish life locally, in Israel, and worldwide.
- Your gift supports a network that sustains Jewish life every day and responds immediately in times of crisis. A gift to Federation is the most effective way to secure our future.

Who does Federation fund and how much do they receive?

Through regular allocations and strategic funding, Federation fuels approximately 50 different organizations. I am happy to share links to our allocations summary and impact reports that shares a specific financial breakdown of how Annual Community Campaign funds are invested in the Jewish people and which organizations receive our support. The [2024-2025 Financial Report](#)

What are Federation's fundraising expenses?

Federation's cost of fundraising is less than 12% of funds raised. We are proud that this is among the lowest for any major non-profit organization in North America. We are able to do this through prudent management and an effective partnership between an efficient professional staff and hundreds of volunteers.

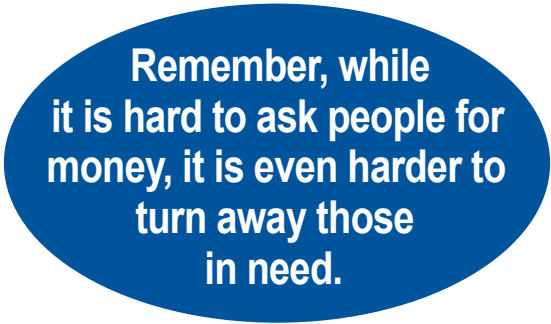
How does Federation make a difference?

Federation makes a difference through its unparalleled community-wide reach, comprehensive strategy, and proven capacity for rapid response. By funding and collaborating with more than 50 organizations, Federation addresses the full spectrum of Jewish life — locally, in Israel, and globally.

This past year alone, your generosity enabled:

- **Protecting our community**
From championing Ottawa's Bubble Zone Bylaw to strengthening partnerships with police and civic leaders, Federation fortified the safety and dignity of every Jew in our city.
- **Opening doors to Jewish life and learning**
Over \$900,000 was invested in Jewish education and \$255,000 in cultural and leadership experiences. Tuition incentives helped more families access supplementary schools, while programs like PJ Library, March of the Living, and Microgrants ignited Jewish journeys for thousands.
- **Lifting up the vulnerable**
Jewish Family Services provided emergency financial aid to 136 households, Tamir supported adults with developmental disabilities to live with dignity, and Hillel Lodge delivered thousands of kosher meals and care for seniors and survivors.
- **Inspiring Jewish connection**
High-impact programs like HOTtawa, the Chanukah Ball, interfaith partnerships, Holocaust education initiatives, and newcomer welcome events build pride, belonging, and resilience across our community.

Federation's strategic planning, grounded in research, relationships, and a deep understanding of community needs, ensures that every gift makes a meaningful and lasting impact. From combating antisemitism to empowering the next generation of leaders, Federation sustains Jewish life today while securing our future for generations to come.



**Remember, while
it is hard to ask people for
money, it is even harder to
turn away those
in need.**

*"The blessing of tzedakah is greater for the person who gives
than for the person who receives."*

Leviticus Rabbah 34:10

Frequently Asked Questions

How to answer donor concerns on the current situation in Israel

Federation is not a political organization, and we do not take positions on governments or political movements. Our role is to care for people: to support our partner regions in Israel, strengthen Jewish life here in Ottawa, and respond with compassion to humanitarian suffering.

We recognize the immense pain of the recent conflict, for innocent Palestinians in Gaza, and for Israelis who continue to face terror and the trauma of October 7. Through our federated system, we are helping deliver humanitarian aid, supporting victims of terror, and advocating for safety and dignity for Jewish communities everywhere.

Your support ensures we can continue this vital work.

Ground in Mission, Not Politics

“Federation is not a political body. We do not support any political party or government. Our commitment is to people, to the Jewish community here in Ottawa, to our partner regions in Israel, and to those impacted by conflict.”

Emphasize Compassion and Humanity

“We recognize the immense suffering in Gaza and share deep concern for all innocent lives caught in the crossfire. At the same time, we stand in solidarity with Israelis who continue to face terror and uncertainty.”

Highlight Federation’s Unique Role

“Our focus is humanitarian and community-based. Through our federated system, we help deliver aid, support victims of terror, and ensure Jewish life and security both here at home and in Israel.”

“We amplify compassion while also ensuring the safety, resilience, and dignity of our people.”

Point to Tangible Action

“Your support enables us to respond: by funding humanitarian relief, strengthening our partner communities in Israel, and advocating for Jewish safety and dignity here in Canada.”

Stress Unity and Values

“Federation’s role is to bring people together across divides, to care for the vulnerable, and to uphold the values of compassion, resilience, and community.”

Specific examples of Federation's work

in our partner region of Metula, Israel

Canada Centre (Merkaz Canada)

This flagship community complex, featuring an Olympic-size ice rink, bowling alleys, and more, was funded through Canadian Federation donations. It suffered significant rocket damage during the conflict. The Government of Israel has committed to repairing it, thanks in part to our advocacy and longstanding partnership.

- **Mevoot HaHermon Rehabilitation Centre**

A vital therapeutic facility supporting children and adults with special needs, accident recovery, strokes, and other health challenges. The Centre endured heavy damage from aerial attacks. Local leadership, in collaboration with Canadian federations, remains committed to rebuilding it “better for the future.”

- **Mental Health & Resilience Support (Mashabim)**

In response to trauma and displacement across Northern Israel, Federation-supported initiatives like Mashabim have provided online mental health support, registering over 1,000 participants in a matter of days.

- **On-the-Ground Visits & Connection Building**

Federation leadership, Canadian ambassadors, and coast to coast Federation representatives, have visited Metula to witness needs firsthand, deepen bonds, and guide philanthropic response. They met local leaders, assessed damage, and reaffirmed the strength of these people-to-people ties.

- **Ongoing Emergency Response Coordination**

The Federation system supports both immediate relief (through the Emergency Appeal for the People of Israel) and long-term recovery planning. We work as stewards, ensuring that funding is deployed thoughtfully, balancing urgent needs, medium-term rehabilitation, and future resiliency in Metula and the greater Galilee Panhandle.

Frequently Asked Questions

Economic concerns

I cannot afford to give due to economic concerns.

“If you cannot make the same gift, please do not feel that a smaller gift isn’t important. Every gift is valued. And remember, the pledge you make today isn’t due until December 31, 2026. You can pay your gift in full at that time, or you can pay installments throughout the year.”

If it sounds like they are in significant need — i.e. have lost a job, are isolated and need help, then we should NOT proceed with a fundraising ask. *Simply listen and conclude with some of the following, based on context.* “I’m so sorry to hear about your situation. Please know that we are here for you and the Federation has a wide network of support in place. Would you like a member of Federation’s team to get in touch with you to see how they may be able to assist?”

Other specific concerns

I am unhappy with what one of your funded agencies is doing.

“The Federation funds major beneficiary agencies based on their adherence to our funding formula which mandates that programming serve the Jewish community. Reporting requirements ensure that the Grants and Evaluation Committee review the use and effectiveness of funding. While Federation will share our perspective with agencies, we must respect their independence.”

I am worried that Federation does not support all denominations of Judaism equally.

“Federation’s mission is to foster an inclusive environment that honours and supports diverse opinions and respectful discourse. Our only concern is to help provide a productive environment that reflects the diversity within our community. We do our best to be supportive of all denominations.”

I am worried that Federation has political leanings.

“We do not support any particular political leaning and our only concern is to help provide a productive environment that reflects the diversity within our community.”

Can I designate my gift to a specific agency or program?

“While many agencies in our community are doing incredible work and we encourage you to include them in your charitable giving, it’s important to recognize that only Federation has the unique resources, strategic vision, and community-wide reach to address the full spectrum of our community’s needs. By giving to Federation, you ensure that your contribution supports a comprehensive approach, tackling both immediate challenges and long-term goals that no single agency can address alone. Your gift to Federation is the most powerful way to make a lasting impact across our entire community.”

Can I get involved in any other way, besides donating funds?

“We are always happy to engage volunteers. Please contact **Amos Bitzan** at abitzan@jewishottawa.com”

How to handle a donor's concerns

Expressing a concern is a good thing. It means the donor is thinking about giving. Concerns are like questions and require logical, honest and compelling answers. Deliver appropriate information, and remember to never argue or suggest that the donor is wrong.

- Recognize the type of concern.
- Identify and address the actual concern. Consider using the feel, felt, found method:
“I am sorry that you feel that way, at times I have also felt that ... and I have found ...”
- Remember that NO does not always mean NO — it can mean:
“I do not KNOW...” or it can mean
“yes at a future date”
Now more than ever, a donor may simply need more time to get back on solid financial footing before being able to give. We can work with a “maybe later.”
- Remember that it is not personal.
- Use your listening skills: this can be a great indicator of what is really important to the donor.
- Allow the donor to talk, never cut them off.
- React positively: tackle the concern, not the prospective donor. Avoid argumentative language (for example the word “but”).
- Be honest. If you do not have an answer, say so and get back to the donor with the information as soon as possible (this is actually a great opportunity for another conversation!)
- After answering and discussing the concern, restate the suggested amount and wait, then allow the donor to speak.
- If you need support, do not hesitate to contact **Lindsay Newman** at 613-798-4696 x296 or lnewman@jewishottawa.com.
- Always make sure the conversation ends on a positive note (regardless of the outcome).

**Explain how
every gift makes
a positive impact,
every gift helps.**

There are several options for payment of a pledge:

1) We can call you:

“I can have a member of Federation’s professional team call you to pay over the phone.”

2) You can call us:

“A member of our professional team can process your payment by phone.

You can call 613-798-4696 x 242.”

3) Pay online:

“Visit our website here: <https://jewishottawa.com/annual-campaign-donate>”

4) Pay by mail:

“Send a cheque to Jewish Federation of Ottawa at the following address:

Jewish Federation of Ottawa

21 Nadolny Sachs Private

Ottawa, Ontario K2A 1R9”

5) Stock payments:

Reach out to the Federation’s Development Office or the designated person responsible for donations. They can provide you with the necessary instructions. [Stock transfer form.](#)

Payment timing:

“Make your payment when it is convenient for you. You can make an immediate payment today, in the next month or so, or divide your gift into monthly payments.

While your full payment is not formally due until **December 31, 2026** – kindly pay your gift in full as soon as possible. This allows Federation to plan, allocate and distribute funds more quickly.”

*Hillel used to say,
“The more tzedakah,
the more shalom.”
Pirkay Avot 2:8*

**Thank donors
and then
thank them
again!**

Sample Call Script

Hello, may I speak to _____ please?

My name is _____ and I'm calling on behalf of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa's Annual Community Campaign. Do you have a few moments to talk about this year's Campaign?

"No" - Is there a better time that someone could call?

"Yes" - Thank you very much. Your support makes a difference.

Warm connection: Before we begin: How are you today? Have you done anything special recently? (Use an open-ended question to build rapport.)

Federation is **Here for Good**. It's more than a slogan — it's our vision. Guided by Federation's new strategic plan, we are the **catalyst** that sparks action, the **convener** that brings people and organizations together, and the **connector** that links our community to opportunities here in Ottawa, in Israel, and around the world.

We are focused on three priorities:

- **Ensuring Jewish Life** — caring for the vulnerable, sustaining schools, synagogues, and security, and making Jewish living accessible.
- **Inspiring Jewish Connections** — fostering pride, belonging, and leadership through programs, culture, and meaningful encounters with Israel.
- **Securing Our Jewish Future** — combating antisemitism, building resilience, and preparing our institutions and leaders for tomorrow.

The morning after October 7, it was Federation that our community turned to. We answered the calls, convened the community, increased security, and advocated with government leaders. That's what your gift makes possible.

Will you help ensure Federation is **Here for Good** by supporting this year's Community Campaign?

- If they can donate: Thank you so much. Last year you gave \$XX — would you consider increasing your gift by 10% to \$XX this year?
- If they cannot increase: We understand. Would you be able to renew your gift at the same level as last year? Every gift makes a real impact.

Your pledge is due by December 31, 2026. Many donors choose to set up monthly payments by credit card. Payments can also be made by cheque or online at jewishottawa.com/annual-campaign-donate.

Can I quickly confirm your mailing address, email, and phone number?

On behalf of the Jewish community, thank you for your generosity and partnership. Your support ensures we are truly **Here for Good**.

Have a wonderful day/afternoon/evening.

Canvasser Check List

Use this checklist during a canvass to make sure you go through the most critical stages in the process. Keep this handy during your conversations with donors.

- ☐ Know your donor by reviewing their past giving and speaking to your Campaign team leader if you have any questions.
- ☐ Try to schedule a face-to-face conversation outdoors, (Zoom or FaceTime instead of a phone call) and, where possible, invite a Federation professional to join.
- ☐ Talk about this year's priorities. Use active listening and engage in a conversation with the donor based on their questions, thoughts, and feedback.
- ☐ Ask if they are open to a discussion with a Foundation team member.
- ☐ Make the ask! Aim for the highest amount you think this donor could give, if inspired.
- ☐ Refer to your pledge card for a recommended amount to ask for.
- ☐ Confirm the pledge.
- ☐ Thank the donor for their generous gift.
- ☐ Ask the donor for their preferred payment method.
- ☐ Thank the donor again before concluding the canvass.

*"How wonderful it is that no one need wait a single moment
to start to improve the world."*

Anne Frank

Annual Community Campaign 2026 - Donor Feedback Form

Thank you so much for canvassing. Your role is so important—it makes Federation's work possible. Please share what you've learned!

Canvass Date: _____

1) Your Name: _____

2) Federation Professional Contact: _____

3) Donor Name: _____

4) Was the donor able to make a gift to the Annual Community Campaign this year? yes ☐ no ☐
(if answer is no, skip to #9)

Comments: _____

5. This year's Annual Community Campaign focuses on three key priorities for community recovery.
Which resonated with the donor most?

Ensuring Jewish Life ☐ Inspiring Jewish Connections ☐ Securing our Jewish Future ☐

Please explain: _____

6. Did the donor have any questions about Federation or this year's Campaign? yes ☐ no ☐

Comments: _____

7. Did the donor have anything positive or negative to say about Federation's work? Please specify:

Comments: _____

8. What is the donor's 2026 Campaign gift? _____

9. Any additional notes or comments you'd like to share about this donor?

10. Is there any follow-up needed? yes ☐ no ☐



Thank you for canvassing and completing this form. If you'd like to discuss any of these points further with your Federation professional, don't hesitate to connect with them directly.

A GIFT TO FEDERATION SUPPORTS:

Ensuring Jewish life for all

- Ottawa Jewish Community School
- Torah Day School
- Chabad Hebrew School
- Ottawa Talmud Torah @KBI
- Ottawa Modern Jewish School
- Temple Israel Religious School
- NCSY / Torah High
- Bess and Moe Greenberg Family Hillel Lodge
- AJA 50+ Creative Connections
- Tamir
- Jewish Family Services
- Ottawa Vaad HaKashrut
- Kosher Meals on Wheels
- CIJA (advocacy and security)

Jewish connections

- Holocaust Commemoration and Education
- Oct. 7 Commemorations
- Yom Ha'Atzmaut
- Pride Shabbat
- Hillel Ottawa
- Chabad Student Network
- J-Fellows
- Young Adult events
- Taglit Birthright Israel
- Momentum (JWRP)
- Partnership2Gether
- PJ Library
- March of the Living
- Shinshinim
- JET
- Soloway JCC
- Ottawa Torah Centre

Jewish futures

- Ottawa Jewish Archives
- Innovation and Capacity Building Grants
- Jewish Journeys Grants
- Security funding and advocacy
- Training sessions and leadership development
- CIJA (government relations, campus antisemitism & BDS response, bubble legislation, combating hate and antisemitism, interfaith partnerships)
- Agency governance and technical support (training & technology integration)

Differences between the Jewish Federation of Ottawa and the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation

The Federation:

- **raises** funds annually for the community's immediate needs
- **distributes** funding through an allocations process conducted by the Grants and Evaluations Committee
- **plans** for the evolving needs of the community
- **coordinates** community action and represents the views of the community

The Foundation:

- **holds** and manages endowed funds
- **makes** perpetual disbursements to beneficiary agencies of the donor's choice
- **assists** donors with fulfilling their long-term philanthropic giving
- **ensures** that the community is supported forever

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

Lindsay Newman, Development Manager at Lnewman@jewishottawa.com or 613-798-4696 x296