



### Summary

The panel's sixth meeting had two purposes. The first was to review what had occurred in the interviewing process and identify next steps for moving forward. The second was to learn about our target demographic from Riv-Ellen Prell, Faculty in the Department of American Studies and Director of the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Minnesota.

### Expert Interviews by Panel Members

The panel reviewed its current status on the interviews with experts in the St. Paul Jewish community, other Jewish communities, and non-Jewish communities. Panelists then spent time giving updates on completed interviews or interviews that were in process of being set-up. The discussion then ended with more suggestions of experts that the panel should reach out to and commitments from people to do specific interviews over the following weeks.

### Interviews with members of the community

#### *Review and Approve Interviewer*

The Federation approved the budget for expert interviews. Nora Murphy, Panel Process Facilitator, interviewed professionals to identify someone who would be a great interviewer for this process. She selected and presented Jason Altman's CV to the group as a potential interviewer. Altman has a Bachelor's degree in Journalism and a Master's degree in Evaluation, and extensive interviewing and writing experience. The panel members approved Altman as the interviewer.

#### *Review interview protocol and ten young people*

Next, Nora reviewed a proposed interview protocol. The protocol focuses on people's life stories, specifically, events or different chapters in their lives that impacted who they were. It was clarified that the interviews should also have an explicit section focused on the intersection of these chapters or events with Judaism or the Jewish community. Nora agreed to modify the interview protocol and share with Randi Roth for review.

#### *Picking demographic strips we'd like to see in young people*

The panel would like a variety of demographic strips during these interviews, including:

- 1) 2-3 affiliated, meaning that individual grew up in this community and will likely stay their entire lives
- 2) Affiliated with the St. Paul Jewish community, but moved here from somewhere else



3) Unaffiliated or unengaged with the St. Paul Jewish community.

The panel agreed to shift to email to finish this conversation.

### **Riv-Ellen Prell's PEW Presentation**

The remainder of the panel meeting was dedicated to learning from Riv-Ellen Prell, Faculty in the Department of American Studies and Director of the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Minnesota. The presentation largely focused on the following themes:

- **Intermarriage.** The overall result of intermarriage is the loosening bonds to Jewish life. This corresponds to a drop in anti-Semitism but also decreases Jewish persistence. Those that inter-marry have children that intermarry and their kids following them intermarry.
- **Methodology of the PEW study.** There was a growth in Jewish population for the first time in a decade, but a growing number do not define themselves as religious or affiliate with a specific denomination.
- **Millennials.** Millennials are those that are born after 1980. What is unique about millennials is that they don't affiliate, marry less than anyone, and are generally more politically independent. Millennials also have identity fluidity and switch or leave their birth religion in unprecedented numbers.
- **Urgency.** There is a worry that "ethnic cosmopolitan Judaism" will disappear if leaders with deep Jewish knowledge and commitment are primarily Orthodox.
- **What works to create identity and connectedness?** Riv-Ellen shared several options including offering cultural venues, choices and options, non-traditional forms of associations and Shabbat projects in homes outside of communal institutions.

The presentation ran over and there wasn't time for debrief and discussion. The intention is to revisit this at the next panel meeting.

### **Next Steps**

The panel members will continue to move forward on interviews. Passover occurs between this meeting and the next, reducing the already limited time people have to give this process between meetings.