

JEWISH COMMUNITY IMPACT FUND
2017 Request for Proposal Form

Proposal must be received by January 27, 2017 at david@jewishannarbor.org

Name of Program or Project: “Jewish Diversity”

Funding Requested (up to \$10,000): \$7500

A. Sponsoring Organization Information:

1. Contact Person:
 - i. Name: Martin B. Shichtman
 - ii. Title: Director, Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies/Professor, Department of English
 - iii. Mailing address: Department of English, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197
 - iv. Email address: martin.shichtman@emich.edu
 - v. Telephone number: 734-487-0978
2. Website: <http://www.emich.edu/jewishstudies/>
3. List of officers or governing committee: Faculty Advisory Board: Jessica “Decky” Alexander (Communications, Media, Theatre Arts), Jeffrey L. Bernstein (Political Science), Pamela Landau (Psychology), Martin B. Shichtman (English), Kathy Stacey (Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, *ex officio*)
4. Tax-exempt status (if you are not a non-profit organization you may request that Federation “host” your project. In this instance, the Federation would pay receipts submitted up to the limit of the grant but would not distribute funds in advance.)

The EMU Foundation will act as the fiduciary agent for the group and has tax-exempt status as a 501c3.

Tax Exempt ID: 38-2953297

B. Sponsoring Agency Mission Statement (if you do not have one, please describe the purpose of your agency in one paragraph):

The EMU Center for Jewish Studies features a minor offering courses—including domestic travel classes and study abroad classes—concerned with the history and culture of the Jewish people. EMU Jewish studies also sponsors a lecture series, major cultural events, a web research repository—“Nineteenth-Century Jewish Life”— and the linguistics/oral history project, “Jewish Life and Language in Southeast Michigan.”

C. Program Narrative: In no more than 1,000 words, please describe the program by answering the following questions:

Need:

A recent article in *The Atlantic* generated a storm of controversy, especially in the Jewish community, by asking: “Are Jews White?” The question is disturbing for a number of reasons. Certainly it cues the language of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century racialism, a discourse that encouraged a new kind of anti-Semitism that would culminate in the Holocaust. But equally disturbing about the *Atlantic*’s provocation is that it seems to disregard, almost completely, the many Jews of color living throughout the world, people for whom this question is entirely absurd. As the political winds in the US and globally grow increasingly unsettling, we must find ways to locate unity, to build bridges, not only among our many Jewish communities, but beyond them as well. Eastern Michigan University is a large, very diverse, state-funded comprehensive institution. As such, it provides a perfect venue to consider “Jewish Diversity.” We are seeking a Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor Impact Grant of \$7500 to help bring speakers and events to the EMU/Ann Arbor area as part of this initiative.

Populations to be addressed:

With “Jewish Diversity,” we hope to be able to attract speakers like African-American Rabbi Capers C. Funnye, Jr., spiritual leader of Beth Shalom B'nai Zaken Ethiopian Hebrew Congregation, Chicago, and recently installed as installed as Chief Rabbi of the Hebrew Israelites in the United States of America; and/or, perhaps, Rabbi Angela Warnick Buchdahl, Senior Rabbi at Central Synagogue in Manhattan, the first Asian-American to be ordained as a rabbi and the first Asian-American to be ordained as a cantor anywhere in the world. If possible, we will try to arrange for a visit from Mehereta Baruch-Ron to discuss her incredible transformation from Ethiopian village child to Deputy Mayor of Tel Aviv. There will also be an event involving music or comedy—we see the arts as integral to the theme of Jewish diversity. We are, in fact, already beginning to highlight Jewish diversity in music with an April 3 concert at The Ark by Divahn, a brilliantly talented, all-woman ensemble that plays Mizrahi/Sephardi/Jewish-Middle Eastern music—Divahn’s lead singer, Galeet Dardashti, an Iranian Jew, is speaking at EMU on April 2 about “Sacred Music Hits the Israeli Pop Charts: Money, Music and Mizrahiyut (ethnic identify).” This 2017 Impact Grant would greatly help us communicate with our many communities about the wide diversity of Jewish performing artists.

Collaborations/Impact:

Coordinated by the Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies in cooperation with the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, the Ann Arbor JCC, and area synagogues, we will invite churches, mosques, as well as secular organizations to join us in considering the issue of “Jewish Diversity.” We hope to foster a conversation that will include the Jewish and non-Jewish African-American, Asian-American, Latino-Latina, Middle Eastern, and mixed-race communities of Southeast Michigan. We intend to reach out to these groups, both directly—by

phone, through meetings with community/religious leaders, with social media, and with traditional media (newspapers, bulletins, newsletters)—and with help from campus organizations and community/religious groups. We will ask each speaker/performer for permission to videotape—though it is often the case that such professionals request not to be taped—so that their messages can be made available to even larger groups. However, our primary intent is to bring people together, not only to hear speakers and performers, but also to engage with them and with each other. We see this as an extraordinary opportunity to address the issue of what it means to be a member of a minority group, and what it means to be a member of a minority group within a minority group.

Timeline:

1. The EMU Center for Jewish Studies will negotiate with speakers/performers during the Winter and Summer semesters (January-August), 2017.
2. Spaces at EMU and in the community will be arranged. Choices include, but are not limited to, the EMU Student Center Auditorium, the EMU Student Center Grand Ballroom, Pease Auditorium, McKenny Hall, the Ann Arbor JCC, and The Ark. EMU will make arrangements for security and parking.
3. The EMU Center for Jewish Studies and the EMU Foundation will begin outreach and fundraising.
4. The EMU Center for Jewish Studies will generate publicity for the performance—both on campus and throughout EMU’s various communities.
5. Speakers and performers will engage the community during the Fall and Winter semesters, 2017-2018.

Name of Sponsoring Organization: The Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies

D. How will the program be evaluated and the impact measured?

The Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies believes that, with the help of our many friends in the community, we can fill the chosen venues for these very important presentations/performances. We expect the events will garner press coverage, and we will make sure they are covered in social media as well. The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor has greatly contributed to the growth and influence of The Center as an institution in our community. These events will help The Center strengthen and expand its supporter base—especially among the many diverse populations that make up our university and Southeast Michigan. It will assist us in making Jewish studies more exciting to all of our students and engage members of the community never previously reached.

E. Program Budget (please detail support from sponsoring agency and any additional funding sources)

\$20,000

\$7,500 is requested from the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor Community Impact Fund.

\$12,500 in support will be raised from other organizations, private donors, and university sources. (We expect to reach out to other funding agencies, like The Academic Engagement Network, which is helping to fund the Divahn concert in April)

Facilities—i.e. venue, parking, security, sound equipment and engineering—will be provided by the Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies.

F. Program Sustainability

1. Is this an ongoing program and, if so, how will the program be funded in future years?

The EMU Center for Jewish Studies locates a good portion of its identity in making Jewish life and culture accessible to the many communities of Southeast Michigan. The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor has been, without question, our most influential partner in helping with programming and publicity. As we go forward, The Center hopes to continue working side-by-side with the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, even as we become increasingly financially independent.

2. If you are requesting multiple year funding, a decision to fund year two will only be made upon evaluation of the success of year one.

This is a one-year program.

G. Brief Project Summary (please provide a brief summary – 100 words or less – to describe your project for posting on the Impact Fund website page)

The Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies is asking for assistance from a Jewish Federation of Ann Arbor Impact Grant Fund to help us create programming that highlights “Jewish Diversity.” We will provide a lecture/performance series, hoping to foster a conversation that will include the Jewish and non-Jewish African-American, Asian-American, Latino-Latina, Middle Eastern, and mixed-race communities of Southeast Michigan.

Dated:

Applicant(s): The Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies

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