

**JEWISH COMMUNITY IMPACT FUND**  
**2017 Request for Proposal Form**

Proposal must be received by January 27, 2017 at [david@jewishannarbor.org](mailto:david@jewishannarbor.org)

Name of Program or Project: LGBTQ and Jewish: A Photovoice Project

Funding Requested (up to \$10,000): \$ 3856.50

**A. Sponsoring Organization Information:**

I request that the Federation host this project, since I am an individual and not a non-profit.

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

N/A – I am requesting that the Federation host this project.

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

While the Jewish community has made great strides over the past twenty years in welcoming and including its LGBTQ members, there is room for continued investigation into the ways to invite, accept, acknowledge, and celebrate LGBTQ Jews in all facets of Jewish life. Identifying how sexual orientation and religious identity complement one another can inform community-wide reflection in order to best serve all its members.

I propose to conduct a “Photovoice” project with a group of eight to ten Jewish and LGBTQ community members, culminating in a photo exhibit and panel discussion on the experiences of individuals who are both Jewish and gay. “Photovoice” is a community-based research method that involves putting cameras into the hands of typically marginalized community members to allow them to become recorders, researchers, and catalysts for social change (Wang and Burris, 1997).

This Photovoice group would have three main goals: 1) To empower the participants to express their experiences as both Jews and members of the LGBTQ community, 2) To promote discussion among the participants about the photos they will take and what they represent, and 3) To create a platform for participants to engage with the public about the themes emerging from the photos. This platform would involve mounting an exhibit of photos with brief narratives in the JCC’s Amster Gallery in January-February 2018, along with a public panel discussion in which the participant photographers could share their thoughts on the intersection of Judaism and being gay in their lives. The exhibit would

then be mounted in at least one other venue (such as the UM Spectrum Center, Jim Toy Community Center, or the Hillel at UM or EMU) to further the reach and the opportunities for discussion.

Participant recruitment will begin in the summer of 2017. I will seek out participants who self-identify as Jewish and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer, and who range in age from teenagers through older adults. We will meet weekly in the fall of 2017 for six to eight weeks. I will provide education on the Photovoice method, including ethical and safety issues, as well as basic photography concepts such as composition and perspective. I will then provide participants with cameras to use for the duration of the project (if they do not already have high-quality cameras).

Outside of group meetings, participants will take photos that respond to prompts assigned each week, such as “What strengthens your involvement in the Jewish community?” “What hinders your involvement in the Jewish community?” and “Where/when do you feel that your Jewish identity and sexual orientation fit together best?” Each week we will share and discuss their photos using the “SHOWeD” mnemonic (Wang and Burris, 1997). They will then write short narratives about the significance of each photo.

The final photo exhibit will be mounted in the JCC’s Amster Gallery in January/February 2018, to include 20 to 40 photos with brief narratives. A panel discussion/reception event will kick off the exhibit opening. Jewish congregations and organizations, non-affiliated Jews, UM student groups, and LGBTQ groups would be invited and encouraged to attend.

The benefits of this project extend to both the participants and the greater Jewish community in Ann Arbor. Participants will feel that their voices deserve to be heard. Their confidence may grow as they learn new skills to express their views, and they may find solidarity with fellow participants. The Jewish community will better understand the strengths and needs of the LGBTQ community, increasing awareness and sensitivity to LGBTQ issues as they intersect with Judaism. Ultimately, it is hoped that this project will initiate or continue a self-examination by the Jewish community of the ways in which it can be more inclusive and welcoming to those who identify as LGBTQ.

**Timeline:**

Summer 2017: Recruitment of 8-10 participants. I will reach out to groups including the local synagogues as well as JCS, the Reconstructionist Havurah, Chabad, U of M’s Hillel (and particularly AHAVA, their LGBTQ group), EMU’s Hillel, the Spectrum Center at U of M, and the Jim Toy Center.

October through December 2017: Weekly meetings with participants including discussions of the Photovoice method and the sharing and discussion of photos that participants take on their own between meetings. Participants will select 2-3 of their own photos and narratives for inclusion in the final exhibit.

January-February 2017: Photovoice exhibit is mounted at JCC's Amster Gallery, with panel discussion event to kick off the exhibit.

February-April 2017: Photovoice exhibit is mounted at 1-2 additional venues.

*Sources cited:*

*Wang, C., and M. A. Burris. "Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment." Health Education & Behavior 24.3 (1997): 369-87.*

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

Program evaluation and impact for a project like this are best measured using qualitative methods. I will dedicate the final session of the Photovoice group to allowing the participants to evaluate the impact of the group on their own understanding of and ability to share their experiences of being Jewish and gay. Participants will be provided both with a written evaluation to complete and opportunities for discussion around questions such as: How did your participation in this project change you? What skills did you gain? What did you learn? What will you take away from this project? What aspects of participation were most beneficial to you, and why? What aspects of the project would you change, and how? How do you expect the final exhibit and panel will affect viewers? How might your involvement in the Jewish community change following your participation in this project?

The impact of the mounted photo exhibit will be measured in two ways. First, community members will be able to contribute their reactions and thoughts on the exhibit in real time as they view it: The exhibit will include space for viewers to post post-it notes next to the photographs with comments, questions, and reflections on the images and narratives shared. These post-it notes will then become part of the exhibit, documenting the process by which community members gain new insights into the lived experience of their LGBTQ friends. Second, viewers will be invited to complete a survey with open-ended questions to be distributed at the exhibit. Survey questions will gauge how the exhibit influenced viewers' thoughts about inclusion of LGBTQ individuals in the Jewish community, what they learned, what questions they may have, and what actions they believe are necessary next steps.

The impact of the panel discussion (which will kick off the photo exhibit) will be similarly assessed with a written survey for attendees to complete. Again, open-ended questions will gauge whether and how the panel discussion influenced attendees' understanding of the intersection of sexual orientation and Jewish identity, thoughts on inclusion, and ideas for next steps.

The results from these three sources of data – the Photovoice participants, the viewers of the resulting photo exhibit, and the attendees at the panel discussion – will be compiled and shared with the Jewish community through the Jewish Federation.

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

Please see attached.

**F. Program Sustainability**

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

This will not be an ongoing 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)

While the Jewish community has made strides in welcoming its LGBTQ members, there is room for continued investigation into the ways to include, acknowledge, and celebrate LGBTQ Jews in all facets of Jewish life. I propose to conduct a “Photovoice” project with a group of Jewish and LGBTQ community members, culminating in a public photo exhibit and panel discussion on the experiences of individuals who are both Jewish and gay. (“Photovoice” is a participatory research method involving photography, discussion, and action.) Identifying how sexual orientation and religious identity complement one another can inform community-wide reflection in order to best serve all.

Dated: 1/27/17

Applicant(s): Abigail Lawrence-Jacobson, Ph.D., LMSW

By: Name: Abigail Lawrence-Jacobson

Title: Social worker; Researcher

Email: abbielawrence2@gmail.com

## LGBTQ and Jewish - a Photovoice Project

### Proposed Budget

| <b>Item</b>                       | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Cost per</b>                             | <b>Total</b>             |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| Misc. supplies for group meetings | Flipchart, markers, copying of handouts, copying of evaluation survey forms, etc.   |   | \$80                     |
| LCD Projector                     | For sharing photos in group meetings  |   | In-kind, from Federation |
| Laptop                            | For uploading digital photos and editing.   |   | In-kind, from Abbie      |
| Photo editing software            | Lightroom   |   | In-kind, from Abbie      |
| Digital cameras                   | For those participants who do not have their own cameras (with high enough resolution to enlarge photos), Something akin to Canon Powershot ELPH 160. | \$130/camera, estimating 5 cameras needed.  | \$650                    |
| Memory Cards for cameras          | Memory cards with 4-8 GB.   | \$8/card, estimating 5 cards needed         | \$40                     |
| USB Cables for cameras            | For connecting camera to computer for editing/emailing photos   | \$6/USB cable, estimating 5 needed          | \$30                     |
| Photo printing                    | For sharing of photos in class  | .63/5x7 prints, estimating 50 needed        | \$31.50                  |
| Photo mounting and display        | Professional printing photos onto foam core boards with narrative labels.   | Estimating 25-35 photo boards at \$25 each. | \$875                    |

|                  |   |                       |        |
|------------------|---|-----------------------|--------|
| Facilitator time | Time spent recruiting (7 hours), training (5 hours), preparing and facilitating 8 group sessions (39 hours), getting exhibit printed and mounted (6 hours), marketing (4 hours) and evaluating (4 hours). | 65 hours at \$30/hour | \$1950 |
| Refreshments     | For panel discussion and photo exhibit kick off event   |                       | \$200  |

**Total: 3856.50**