

# The Jewish Community Response and Impact Fund

Learn More at [JewishTogether.org/ResponseImpactFund](https://JewishTogether.org/ResponseImpactFund)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### GENERAL

#### **What is the Jewish Community Response and Impact Fund?**

The Jewish Community Response and Impact Fund (JCRIF) is a unique collaboration between Jewish foundations and the Federation system to provide targeted assistance to select U.S.-based Jewish organizations experiencing financial distress as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund's focus is to maintain the infrastructure of Jewish life that advances Jewish education, engagement and leadership.

There are two elements to JCRIF:

1. An **interest-free loan program** that will help preserve critical Jewish communal sectors and organizations, providing immediate, short-term assistance to select affected organizations and offer them some breathing room in a volatile environment; and
2. An **aligned grant program** that will help sectors, networks and organizations evolve in response to the crisis, exploring strategic shifts to enable them to continue to serve their communities and audiences even in different forms.

#### **Why have you created this fund?**

The COVID-19 crisis is creating unprecedented needs in the U.S. and around the world. Jewish communities have been significantly impacted by the health crisis and the associated shutdowns. Every sector of Jewish communal life is facing financial and programmatic challenges, including interrupted revenue from activities, uncertain fundraising prospects, program cancellations and modifications, and increased need.

At the same time, the crisis is forcing many organizations, networks and sectors to think about the systemic changes that the crisis might necessitate, as well as new opportunities for programmatic and organizational adaptation in the months and years to come.

In response to the acute and widespread needs facing Jewish communal organizations, a new consortium of Jewish foundations is partnering with the Federation system to provide targeted assistance to organizations across Jewish communities in the United States, to ensure that they can continue their crucial work for the duration of this pandemic and beyond.

#### **Who are the foundations involved with JCRIF?**

JCRIF includes seven founding funders: the Aviv Foundation, the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation, the Jim Joseph Foundation, Maimonides Fund, The Paul E. Singer Foundation, and the Wilf Family Foundation. The fund welcomes additional investors into both the loan and grant programs.

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### **Why isn't the fund accepting applications from all Jewish organizations?**

The challenges facing Jewish organizations are extensive. We recognize that we will not be able to address the entirety of those needs. We are committed to making a difference, while also respecting the valuable time of nonprofits. In an effort to create an efficient process that respects the time of applicants and ensures quick turnaround time and deployment of resources, the loan and grant programs will proactively source grant opportunities that seem likely to be funded, rather than accepting unsolicited proposals that would likely have little chance of being supported.

### **Why are you prioritizing funding specifically for organizations that promote Jewish engagement, education and leadership?**

At this moment of crisis, funders are facing unprecedented needs both in meeting the growing basic human needs in their communities and in saving from collapse the core infrastructure of Jewish life, including synagogues, schools, JCCs, camps and more. JCRIF will take on one element of this vast amount of need by focusing its resources on maintaining the infrastructure of Jewish life that advances Jewish education, engagement and leadership. The funders supporting JCRIF believe investing in these Jewish organizations and networks during this pivotal time will be vital to ensuring a strong future for American Jewry in the months and years to come.

### **How will the fund ensure that organizations outside of the mainstream legacy organizations, and organizations that focus on underrepresented communities, will also receive assistance?**

Our goal is to be sensitive and responsive to all of the dynamics about how this multifaceted crisis is playing out differently in different geographical locations, among different demographic populations, and in different sectors of Jewish communal life. JCRIF funders share a commitment to building diverse, dynamic, creative, and vibrant Jewish communities that include both a mix of "legacy" and "emerging" organizations. Ultimately, our goal is to meet the needs of many different types of Jewish institutions that serve as many people as possible, and that do so as inclusively as possible.

## **INTEREST-FREE LOAN PROGRAM**

### **Who is eligible for the interest-free loan program?**

The loan program will proactively source applications only from U.S.-based Jewish not-for-profit organizations, including national umbrella organizations that can then distribute loans to the institutions in their networks and/or apply as borrowers in support of loans for their networks.

### **How do the loans work?**

These are short-term, unsecured loans that are meant to alleviate cash flow challenges and to enable essential Jewish communal organizations to maintain services and/or make payroll in the coming 3-6 months. The loans, which must be repaid, will also provide bridging capital to support organizations as they seek access to Small Business Administration (SBA) loans available through federal stimulus packages.

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## Who are the partners on the loan program?

The loan program will be based at the Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF), which will act as the loan fund administrator and lender of record. It will also partner with The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA), which will source and recommend loan applications and maintain borrower-facing communications. JFNA will work with key national Jewish networks, including members of the National Emergency Coalition, as well as independent Jewish nonprofits, to source loan applicants.

## What is the interest rate on these loans?

Loans provided by JCRIF will have 0% interest.

## How long will these loans be available?

Applications made via intermediaries or national organizations will be considered on an ongoing basis, assuming sufficient funding is available.

## How large of a loan can my organization get?

Loans will vary depending on the organization's need, but will generally range from a \$500,000 minimum to a \$3 million maximum. Organizations sourced through national networks can be considered for minimum loans of \$150,000.

## Will the loans need to be repaid?

Yes. The loans are interest-free, but the principal amount must be repaid according to the terms of the loan agreement between the organization and JCRIF. Organizations will have up to 48 months to repay the loans.

This is an important distinction between this loan program and the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program that will forgive loans if certain requirements are met.

## How will loan recipients be decided?

Once an application has been received, the Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) will review the submission and conduct a financial review and risk assessment. JCRIF will also conduct a qualitative impact-based assessment. Based on these assessments, JCRIF leadership will determine whether an organization meets the criteria to receive a loan and the appropriate size of the loan. This process is designed to fully vet the needs of each organization and maximize the overall impact of the loan program.

## How does my organization apply for a loan?

We are not accepting unsolicited loan applications. In an effort to create an efficient process that respects the time of applicants and ensures quick turnaround time and deployment of resources, both the loan and grant programs will proactively source funding grant opportunities. The programs will not accept unsolicited proposals.

## How long will it take for me to know that my organization has been accepted for a loan?

JCRIF's goal is to ensure that decisions can be made as expeditiously as possible after the application has been received, with funding following shortly thereafter.

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## **ALIGNED GRANT PROGRAM**

### **What is an aligned grant program?**

Each funder in the JCRIF grant program has committed to make a certain amount of grants to applications that come through the program. There is no shared pool of funding; each funder makes decisions on their own. Joining forces in this way enables funders to quickly consider a wider variety of funding opportunities than they might have accessed on their own, and it makes the application process much more efficient and effective for applicants.

### **What are these grants for?**

Grant recipients will likely fall into at least one of three categories: emergency funds for immediate needs; systemic change efforts, including new collaborations and alliances; and investing in new opportunities and promising programmatic adaptations emerging from the crisis.

### **How will grant recipients be decided?**

We will work collaboratively with applicants on their proposals and then distribute the proposals to the funders. Each funder will make their own allocation decisions as expeditiously as possible. The program will utilize streamlined review and reporting processes wherever possible.

### **How long will these grants be available?**

The grant program will operate through the end of 2020, assuming sufficient funding is available.

### **How does my organization apply for a grant?**

We are not accepting unsolicited grant applications. In an effort to create an efficient process that respects the time of applicants and ensures quick turnaround time and deployment of resources, both the loan and grant programs will proactively source funding grant opportunities. The programs will not accept unsolicited proposals.

### **How long will it take for my organization to know that it has received a grant?**

We will provide responses to applications with reasonable expedience. JCRIF is prepared to issue grants promptly and on a timetable commensurate with grantees' needs.