

ISRAEL

Jerusalem Foundation

History

The founder of the Jerusalem Foundation, former Mayor of Jerusalem Teddy Kollek, had a dream of building a pluralistic city where all of its citizens could live together equally – religious and secular, veteran and new immigrant, rich and poor, Arab, Christian and Jew. He wished to improve educational opportunities, close the gaps between the city’s different sectors and create a city to serve all its residents. Realizing that the municipal government would not be able to respond to this complex task alone, he created the Jerusalem Foundation in 1966. Ruth Cheshin has been the President of the Foundation since its inception. She continues to lead the Foundation and, together with the international Chairman Dan Meridor and boards around the world, Teddy Kollek’s values are being carried forward to a new generation.

Current situation: Facts and figures

Geographic area served:	Jerusalem, Israel
Population size of service area:	706,300
Total sum of grants made in 2007:	N/A
Total number of grants made in 2007:	N/A
Total sum of the income/ donations in 2007:	N/A
Single largest source of income in 2007:	N/A
Is there an endowment? Yes/No.	Yes
If Yes, the size of the endowment:	US \$47,300,000

Activities and impact

The Jerusalem Foundation is currently constructing some 15 buildings across the city at a total cost of US \$25 million. It made well over 120 grants in 2006 and raised US \$30 million in 2007.

Example: Poverty is one of Jerusalem’s most pressing problems. In the latest National Insurance Institute report on poverty in Israel, Jerusalem was ranked as the poorest city per capita in the country. Thirty-two point eight percent of Jerusalemites live below the poverty line, and 56.6 percent of the city’s children live in families with per capita incomes below the poverty line.

Initiated in 1999, The Caring Community is based first and foremost on the principles of empowerment and self-help. Specifically, the project aims to give residents in underprivileged communities the means to pull themselves out of poverty and hopelessness. For the first time, residents have the opportunity to take responsibility for their community’s fate. They control the choice of programs to be developed and the allocations of funding to those programs. To this end, local residents in each community formed steering committees together with representatives of the various service professionals in the community (the schools, social welfare authorities, NGOs, the community councils, the local community center, etc). On each steering committee, residents comprise about 60 percent and service professionals about 40 percent of the members. A citywide committee, chaired by Dr. David Harman and with resident participation, sets

general guidelines and provides resources, but does not interfere with what the local communities decide. Each community was given a grant and had to decide what projects to develop and how to allocate funding per project.

For those participating in the project, there is no doubt about the impact. Meir Abitbul sums it up when he says: “The Caring Community has engendered hope in our community. We get support for our ideas and feel that it is possible to effect change. I know that this is a marathon – a long-term process. I may not see the full results for my children. But you can’t be a social activist just for personal reasons. We are working for the future. And I am confident that it will be a better one for all of us.”

Operations and staffing

The Jerusalem Foundation is overseen by a public council. This general assembly meets at least three times a year. It appoints an executive management committee comprised of volunteers from the community. There are over 50 full-time staff members at the Jerusalem Foundation working in four departments: technical, finance and administration, projects, and fundraising. Both the voluntary and paid members of the Jerusalem Foundation reflect the diversity of the residents of Jerusalem.

Community foundation income

Income categories

Donor categories:

- Individuals and corporations 69%
- NGOs 2%
- Foundations 15%
- Municipal and government support 14%

Purposes

In 2006 the Foundation received:

- US \$3.9 million of unrestricted contributions and support,
- US \$23.6 million funds for specific programs and projects, and
- US \$1.7 million for endowment funds.

In addition:

- Unrestricted investment income totaled US \$5.3 million.
- Total new firm pledges in 2006 was US \$38.7 million.
- Fundraising and operating costs amounted to US \$3.1 million, funded from unrestricted gifts and investment income.

A list of programs and projects supported by the Foundation can be received upon request.

Permanent funds/Sustainability

Endowment funds total US \$47.3 million at the end of 2006. Building the endowment fund is a high priority for the Foundation

Environment for philanthropy

Local attitudes

Research in Israel shows that Israelis are generous givers per capita. Much of the nation's wealth, however, is located in the Tel Aviv area, while Jerusalem, despite being an administrative, spiritual and educational center, is the poorest city in the country. Fundraising in the city is particularly challenging

Legal and tax environment

The bulk of the Jerusalem Foundation's funding comes from overseas, where the Foundation has branch offices governed by the prevalent laws of each country. In those countries where government incentives are minimal or non-existent, it has a negative impact with the result being that, in general, people give less.

Changing attitudes and the national or regional environment

Many charities in Israel would welcome the abolition or reduction of VAT, as well as better tax breaks for charitable gifts, and possibly more devolution from government to civil society services

Current challenges and future developments

Jerusalem has close to 300,000 children living in the city, of whom 52 percent live beneath the poverty line. Education is the key to empowering them and their families. Close to 450,000 Israelis and 250,000 Palestinians live in Jerusalem. They are the key to any advance in peace. Coexistence efforts among the Jews, Muslims and Christians are critical. Budgetary cuts have left the city's cultural institutions reeling; they require constant nurturing.

Meeting organizational support needs

In our work we are aided by:

1. Government and Municipal offices – their knowledge of needs in the field and occasionally matching funding
2. Other not-for-profit funders for matching funding and their additional knowledge on specific issues, such as the Abraham Fund for Jewish-Arab coexistence issues, Yad Hanadiv
3. Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) – Israel – both as partners in program planning and matching funding
4. Jerusalem Association of Community Centers (JACC) – network of community centers through which many programs are implemented
5. Jerusalem Institute of Israel Studies – an important resource for accurate information and issue analysis.

International links

The Jerusalem Foundation is a member of the European Foundation Centre (EFC). Its representatives attend the EFC's annual conference as well as various professional conferences on different aspects of fundraising it holds throughout the year. Through one of these conferences the Foundation made contact with the Peace Education Projects organization, a Dutch organization that produces educational interactive exhibits to teach tolerance and coexistence to children and youth. The result is a 3-year,

€400,000 joint venture, the Peace Labyrinth, which opened in October 2007 and aims to teach Jewish and Arab children about the complexities of peace.

Additional resources

For more information on the Jerusalem Foundation, see the foundation's website:

<http://www.jerusalemfoundation.org/media.aspx?MID=548&CID=701>

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