



THE
BRONFMAN
FELLOWSHIP

Strategic Plan | 2023 - 2025

As we celebrate 36 years of The Bronfman Fellowship, our mission of a dynamic, pluralistic future is more critical than ever. We all know how polarized the world seems at this moment, and how deep the divide is between different cultural, societal, and political groups. The events of the past few years have demonstrated that we need more people with the curiosity and courage to enable a vision for a shared society to flourish.

The Bronfman Fellowship provides a beacon for optimism and a path forward, for both the Jewish community and beyond. Pluralism, introspection, and deep Jewish learning are bedrocks of our model.



As 2022 Fellow Ilan Brusso observed: *“On Bronfman... you come in with your own very strong set of beliefs and you hear perspectives thoughtfully articulated, and not attacking at all, that challenge you, giving you a richer view of the world.”*

We are astounded by and proud of the many ways members of our community are contributing to positive change in the world. Bronfmanim are community builders, deep thinkers, moral voices, and cultural creators. Our 1400+ Fellows and alumni from North America and Israel are part

of something remarkable: an intentional Jewish community that shares a passion for learning and doing, whose members lift each other up to new levels of impact.

And there’s much more to come! In this rapidly changing world, the Fellowship continues to evolve while maintaining our deep commitment to nurturing talent, creating space for open discourse, and embracing Jewish learning as an instrument for discovery, creativity, and change. From our decades of experience, we have profound lessons to share with the wider Jewish community.

This exciting strategic plan will ensure that The Bronfman Fellowship continues to lead the way in transformative Jewish education, with an outsized impact on Jewish life and the world.

Here’s to the next 36 years!

Becky Voorwinde
CEO

Dana Raucher
President, Board of Directors

Strategic Priorities

2023-2025

1
STRATEGIC
PRIORITY

Strengthen our core focus on the **Fellowship Year** for our Israeli and American Fellows and premiere a vibrant, **new North American component** to the summer experience.

2
STRATEGIC
PRIORITY

Maximize impact for the first decade post fellowship year when **alumni** are making critical life and leadership decisions & seeking community.

3
STRATEGIC
PRIORITY

Invest in sharing the **Bronfman mindset, approach, and methodology** with **more educators** and **more programs** to advance Jewish teen identity education, viewpoint diversity and pluralism, and the American-Israeli relationship.

4
STRATEGIC
PRIORITY

Develop a **culture and a practice of philanthropic engagement** to ensure long-term sustainability.

THE POWER OF THE BRONFMAN APPROACH

We Identify & Nurture Talent

We identify young people from a wide Jewish spectrum who show the potential to have an outsized impact in the world. Through decades of experience, we know how to select and build a pluralistic cohort whose members will challenge and inspire one another.

We Take Young People Seriously

The Fellowship gives young people the confidence to speak up and the courage to consider alternative perspectives. Staff and educators value and nurture Fellows' capacity as Jewish thinkers, creators, and influencers.

Educators Are Part of the Community

Our esteemed and pluralistic team of educators model open-minded engagement, serve as role models and mentors, and are as excited to learn from those they teach as the Fellows are to learn from them. We cherish the continuity of connection with our educators and encourage them to bring Bronfman's pedagogy to other educational spaces.

Fellows Join A Lifelong Community

The Fellowship Year is just the beginning. With an intergenerational community of 1400+ Bronfmanim in Israel and North America, and a robust offering of post-Fellowship programs and opportunities, our alumni serve as a powerful resource to one another and to the Jewish community.

We Encourage Nuanced Thought & Constructive Disagreement

Never prescriptive, we provide a rare space where open-mindedness, complexity, and healthy disagreement are an essential part of the conversation. We strive for everyone to feel welcome to share their voice, perspective and questions – and, simultaneously, be able to undertake the difficult work of evolving one's worldview.

We Provide Intellectual & Existential Jewish Learning For All Backgrounds

Fellows explore existential ideas through a diversity of Jewish works, including but not limited to traditional religious texts, philosophy, literature and poetry, visual art and contemporary thought. All Fellows are equally challenged to personally engage with Jewish text and ideas, regardless of prior experience with Jewish learning.

Our Curriculum Is Always Evolving

Never static, we grow and evolve our curriculum yearly to respond to contemporary realities and to best meet the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of each new cohort. Our programming is a carefully designed balance of community building, mentorship, cultural exploration, self-reflection, and intellectual stimulation.

Pluralism Is a Mindset

In a world increasingly hostile to viewpoint diversity, we support young people to see the world through a lens broader than their own, giving them the tools to understand that pluralism is nuanced, and identity is expansive. Throughout history, Judaism has been enriched by a multiplicity of expressions, and Fellows are encouraged to contribute their unique voices to the Jewish future.

Mutual Responsibility Flourishes Through Strong Relationships

Fellows are encouraged to connect with each other on a deeply personal level, enhancing their ability to be open to difference. This is at the heart of how we build community among pluralistic cohorts and foster meaningful relationships between Fellows from Israel and North America.

1

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

STRENGTHEN OUR CORE FOCUS ON THE **FELLOWSHIP YEAR** FOR OUR ISRAELI AND AMERICAN FELLOWS AND PREMIERE A VIBRANT, **NEW NORTH AMERICAN COMPONENT** TO THE SUMMER EXPERIENCE.

WHY NOW?

We are committed to providing an immersive and deeply transformative experience each year to a carefully selected group of 46 promising teenagers from North America and Israel. Our mission is grounded in the belief that young people who are enriched and energized by their Judaism are poised to contribute to Jewish life and the world, and to think of not-yet-imagined solutions to complex problems.

Our Fellowship Year curriculum continuously evolves as we prepare Fellows to grapple with current realities

such as polarization, the divide between Jews in Israel and America, social isolation, the lack of appreciation for and understanding of Jewish identity expansiveness, and the growing dimensions of Jewish diversity. In addition, changes made to our program in response to the pandemic blossomed into new opportunities; by providing American and Israeli Fellows with more contextual knowledge about Jewishness in their respective countries, we enhanced their insights, capacity for empathy, and potential for understanding during their joint encounters.

To achieve this priority over the course of the next three years, we will successfully implement these initiatives:

- 1 **DEEPEN** our commitment to reflect 21st Century Jewish identity expansiveness in Israel and America and expand the art, culture, and humanities content and exposure to artists for Amitim in Israel.
- 2 **LAUNCH** a 10-day Opening Seminar in the United States for North American Fellows and continue the summer exploration with travel and learning in Israel.
- 3 **CREATE** new preparatory learning modules before each Context Seminar (joint program of Fellows and Amitim) to increase readiness and receptivity to the American-Israeli encounter.
- 4 **PRIORITIZE** team building as an international staff to model healthy collaboration for our fellows.



Fellows pose with their wonderfully diverse self-portraits after a workshop with an Israeli artist.



Exploring Jewish life in America, on the steps of the Capitol.



Israeli and North American Fellows do a joyous circle dance together.

2

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

MAXIMIZE IMPACT FOR THE FIRST DECADE POST FELLOWSHIP YEAR WHEN ALUMNI ARE MAKING CRITICAL LIFE AND LEADERSHIP DECISIONS AND SEEKING COMMUNITY.

WHY NOW?

With 1,427 alumni in North America and Israel, spanning multiple generations and representing a remarkably broad spectrum of interests, professions, and Jewish identities, the Bronfman community is a force multiplier, amplifying the impact of its members on Jewish life and the world. By facilitating networking and developing alumni programs and projects focused on Jewish enrichment, mentorship, dialogue, and support, we accelerate Fellows' leadership trajectories and build on our culture of pluralistic engagement. In particular, we will continue

to build on the success of programming for alumni in the first decade following their Fellowship Year, when they are in the prime of making major life and career choices, and when their connection to the Fellowship can most strongly influence how they access Jewish community and their decisions about how to use their skills, talents, and passions. In an increasingly polarized and divisive climate, this community offers a rare space to engage in respectful discourse across difference, with people who have the background and the desire to see the world through a lens broader than their own.

To achieve this priority over the course of the next three years, we will successfully implement these initiatives:

- 1 **PROVIDE** access to mentoring, networking, and guidance for alumni in their first decade post-fellowship year.
- 2 **HOST** immersive and accessible weekend and full-day opportunities followed by virtual gatherings for young alumni to experience a reflective Jewish space and to reconnect to pluralistic community.
- 3 **FOSTER** an active and connected pluralistic alumni network, in part by piloting up to three life-stage and professional affinity groups connecting American and Israeli alumni.
- 4 **LAUNCH** Bronfman's "Two Pockets" podcast featuring Bronfman alumni in dialogue across difference to provide thought leadership and examples of pluralism to a wider audience.

Of The Bronfman Fellowship's 1,427 alumni, **49% are under the age of 30.**



3

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

INVEST IN SHARING THE BRONFMAN MINDSET, APPROACH, AND METHODOLOGY WITH MORE EDUCATORS AND MORE PROGRAMS TO ADVANCE JEWISH TEEN IDENTITY EDUCATION, VIEWPOINT DIVERSITY AND PLURALISM, AND THE AMERICAN-ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP.

WHY NOW?

Over the past 36 years, The Bronfman Fellowship has built a reputation for creating a unique Jewish learning experience for young people that is both heartfelt and intellectual, which is transformative in shaping Fellows' long-term commitments to Jewish life and appreciation

for Jewish pluralism. At the same time, the Jewish community and the world have a growing need for educators and an educational model that opens young people up to self-inquiry, intellectual challenge, and an eagerness for dialogue with people who are different from them. Our deep investment in our educational

work, coupled with the small size of our cohorts, has made our program a model for cutting-edge Jewish learning that speaks to the "now" without neglecting the larger arc of Jewish history and content. We are eager to share our methodologies and approaches with others who can adapt them for the contexts in which they work, thus creating an even larger ripple effect that great educators can have by inspiring Jewish ideas, dialogue, and connection.

To achieve this priority over the course of the next three years, we will successfully implement these initiatives:

- 1 **EXPLORE** avenues for codifying and sharing the Bronfman approach with more educators and leaders, such as an Educators' Residency and other approaches.
- 2 **STUDY** and evaluate the Bronfman pedagogical model and identify methods most applicable and relevant to help advance the field, benefiting more intellectually curious young Jews.
- 3 **LAUNCH** efforts in collaboration with like-minded pluralistic organizations in Israel to center the humanities for a wider circle of teens.
- 4 **ENSURE** that all applicants to The Bronfman Fellowship can access more Jewish learning and leadership opportunities as a result of connecting to Bronfman in 11th grade.



"The experience of serving as a Bronfman faculty was unlike any other in my decades as an educator. The deep and reflective approach to learning, the thoughtful curricular arc, and the holistic approach to building an engaged community--in all ways, Bronfman surpassed my wildest expectations and offered me a new way of looking at the possibilities of Jewish education. This successful armature is further enriched by the studied, concerted effort to build a diverse cohort of interactive students committed to the goals of seeking wisdom and supporting one another along the path. I'd return to the program in a heartbeat, but, moreover, this time with Bronfman has ignited a passion to continue working with high-school students. I've since designed a program for this age group that centers on building a new Jewish language for addressing climate change alongside intensive inner work; this ten-week course of study has since been funded, and is now up and running. This small project, in many respects, yet one more ripple cast by the magnificent Bronfman Fellowship and its approach to transformative education."

RABBI DR. ARIEL EVAN MAYSE
Bronfman faculty member; Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Stanford University; Rabbi-in-residence, Atiq: Jewish Maker Institute.

4

STRATEGIC
PRIORITY

DEVELOP A CULTURE AND A PRACTICE OF PHILANTHROPIC ENGAGEMENT TO ENSURE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY.

WHY NOW?

The Fellowship has grown in programmatic depth – from a summer program for American teens starting in 1987, to including a parallel program for Israeli teens beginning in 1998, to today's model featuring immersive programming for Israelis and North Americans totaling around 85 days over the course of a year and an intergenerational community ranging in age from 17 to 54 years old.

With a solid commitment of yearly support from our founding funder, The Samuel Bronfman Foundation, the scope and breadth of our work necessitates broader fiscal support from a wider circle of donors.

Since launching community fundraising in 2013, alumni and their families have contributed over one million dollars. We have also benefited from strong relationships with the broader Jewish philanthropic community.

The success of our educational work relies on an outstanding team of professionals, a healthy organizational infrastructure, and a robust ecosystem of donors and supporters. Achieving our goals in this priority area are essential to fulfilling our long-term mission and vision.

To achieve this priority over the course of the next three years, we will successfully implement these initiatives:

- 1 **ESTABLISH** the internal infrastructure and talent to grow our donor base, eventually hiring a development professional to join our staff team.
- 2 **BUILD** an alumni supporter structure and deepen bonds with parents and relatives of alumni to foster a culture that promotes community, generosity, and pride.
- 3 **CULTIVATE** a major donor program.
- 4 **CULTIVATE** relationships with like-minded grantmakers and potential institutional partners.



Building a Culture of Philanthropy

From the Fellowship's origins as a program launched by philanthropist Edgar M. Bronfman, z"l, in 1987, to the present, when the wider community has grown in its support of our program, we're proud of the increase in funds contributed by individuals. **We saw a 25% increase in giving between 2021 and 2022! Thank you for answering the call.**

TOTAL PROJECTED
2023 REVENUE
\$2,787,700

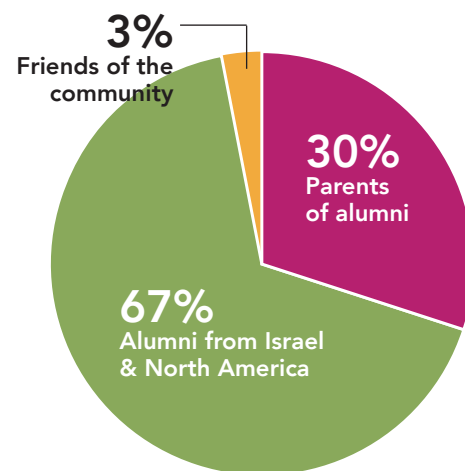
18% INDIVIDUAL DONORS, OTHER GRANTS/GIFTS & EARNED INCOME (PROJECTED)

\$509,000

82% THE SAMUEL BRONFMAN FOUNDATION GRANT (PROJECTED)

\$2,278,700

OUR DONOR COMMUNITY IN 2022



Total 2022 fundraising total: **\$228,000**
Total number of donors in 2022: **404 households**
2022 Expenses:
74% Fellowship Year & Alumni Engagement
26% Administration

Why I Give...

RECENT DONORS SHARE WHY CONTRIBUTING TO THE FELLOWSHIP IS IMPORTANT TO THEM.

“Your commitment to pluralism and inclusion is so important! It is increasingly rare in the Jewish community to find **truly inclusive spaces that embrace serious engagement with Judaism.** Bravo.

EVE WEINBAUM
Parent of '20 Fellow

Bronfman is a remarkable community and network – even as our daughter is still in college, **we are in awe of the way the staff and alumni serve as inspiring resources for her** in navigating Jewish life and leadership and in making choices towards her future.

JOHN & HILARY CAPLAN SOMORJAI
Parents of '19 Fellow

The image that constantly has stuck with me since the fellowship has been the triangle of every chavruta – the text, you, and the person you are learning with. **All learning at Bronfman is conducted with the goal of learning about all of these elements, which I have not found in many other communities...** Bronfman has also connected me to some of the most incredible people.

DAVI FRANK '19 Fellow

Though more than 25(!) years have passed since my Bronfman summer, I still regularly meet fellow alumni throughout my communities. **Regardless of what different beliefs and practices we might hold, I'm struck time and again by the intrinsic commitment of Bronfman alumni to disentangle the knotty questions of our time, together.**

ELISHEVA YUAN '97 Fellow

Thank you for the experience my daughter had in the summer of 1987. It was truly life changing.”

ELIZABETH ALPERT
Parent of '87 alum



Text Study Dynamic Speakers
 DEEP DIALOGUE Shiurim
 Relationships Pluralism
 FACULTY EDUCATORS
 SITE VISITS EXPLORING AMERICA

The Fellowship Year at a Glance

North American Fellowship

IMMERSIVE SEMINARS

5 weeks in the U.S. & Israel over the summer

11 days in the U.S. after the summer

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

Monthly Zoom sessions, including with Amitim

BEYOND BRONFMAN

Guided, Fellow-led projects. Ex: Setting a collection of Yiddish poems about gender & Jewish identity to music.

"Meeting the American Fellows...opened me up to a whole new way of thinking about Judaism and Jewish peoplehood, and what our responsibilities are to each other."

DANA JULIUSBURGER
Amita '15

CONTEXT

(2 joint seminars, in U.S. & Israel)

Israeli Fellowship

IMMERSIVE SEMINARS

26 days over 6 months in Israel

2 weeks in the U.S.

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

Quarterly Zoom sessions with North American Fellows.

BEYOND BRONFMAN

Guided, Fellow-led projects. Ex: Hosting a panel of pluralistic teens about their experiences being the "Other."

Mission & Vision

OUR MISSION

The Bronfman Fellowship nurtures intellectually curious young Jews from Israel and North America to build a more dynamic and pluralistic future.

OUR VISION

We envision a future led by people who see the world through a lens broader than their own and who value Jewish learning as an instrument for discovery, creativity, and change.

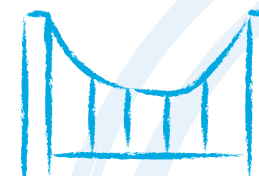
WHAT WE DO

We thoughtfully select promising Jewish people with diverse backgrounds and identities who demonstrate the ability to be cultural creators, deep thinkers, moral voices, and community builders. By exploring the plurality of Jewish life, and by creating a rich tapestry of Jewish ideas, we build a community rooted in meaningful relationships and an expanded sense of possibility.

BRONFMAN IMPACT FRAMEWORK

We exist to prepare promising young people to have a significant impact on the world, particularly on Jewish life. Our alumni leave their mark by exemplifying one or more of these traits and values.

COMMUNITY BUILDERS



Bridge the Divide
Connect
Champion Pluralism

DEEP THINKERS



Cultivate Intellectual
Passion Challenge Status
Quo Embrace Nuance

MORAL VOICES



Seek & Speak Truth
Include All
Apply Jewish Wisdom

CULTURAL CREATORS



Honor Tradition
& Innovate Create Sparks
Have Courage to be Vulnerable

Community Art Workshops
 EXPLORING ISRAEL Existential Questions
 Jewish Peoplehood
 Jewish Ideas JOURNAL GROUPS

36 YEARS OF IMPACT

1,427

ALUMNI AND FELLOWS

in North America & Israel have experienced the Fellowship's transformative Jewish education over the past 36 years.

180

ALUMNI-LED PROJECTS HAVE RECEIVED PEER-FUNDED, EARLY-STAGE GRANTS from the Alumni Venture Fund – including groundbreaking organizations such as Sefaria, Hadar, and YidLife Crisis.

85

DAYS, on average, of intellectually vigorous, all-expenses-paid Fellowship-Year **PROGRAMMING**.

71 PLURALISTIC LEADING EDUCATORS

from North America and Israel have brought their passion for Jewish learning and teaching to Fellows.

4 COHORTS OF ALUMNI AND PARENTS OF ALUMNI have explored "Where Pluralism Thrives" in our exciting intergenerational discussion series.

71

PLURALISTIC LEADING EDUCATORS

from North America and Israel have brought their passion for Jewish learning and teaching to Fellows.

9

ALUMNI ARE RHODES SCHOLARS, including one of the first ever from Israel.

110+

MENTORS AND MENTEES have shared wisdom and guidance as part of our alumni mentoring program.

41 NORTH AMERICAN ALUMNI ARE RABBIS

or studying in rabbinical schools, in a diversity of denominations.

26 ALUMNI ARE LIGHTING UP THE STAGE AND SCREEN

as playwrights, screenwriters, and directors.

Acknowledgements

The strategic planning process was a labor of love, begun before the pandemic and informed by our experiences during that time. We want to extend our thanks to the many alumni who participated in consultations as we designed this plan, to our Board of Directors and staff, to Debbie Joseph who led the process, and to Laura Liebman who served as advisor. We would also like to express our appreciation to our colleagues in the Jewish education field and other communal funders who have served as supports and thought partners.

The Bronfman Fellowship is grateful to our founder, Edgar M. Bronfman, z"l, for his singular vision; to The Samuel Bronfman Foundation for their generous support; and to the alumni, families, faculty, and other friends of the Fellowship who make up this amazing community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Stephanie Berger ('17), *Board Observer*

Elliot Mamet ('10), *Board Observer*





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