

Evaluation Report 2018

The International Nahum Goldmann Fellowship

A Transformative Program of the MFJC

Creating a Global Network of Connected, Educated Jewish Leaders



MFJC | **NGF**

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Jewish connectedness, global reach, innovation, inspiration and a commitment to our rich textual and scholarly history are more important now than ever before.

In 1987, in response to rising centrifugal forces in the Jewish world, the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture founded the International Nahum Goldmann Fellowship. We aimed to create a forum for emerging professional and lay leaders from Jewish communities large and small, across religious denominations and political ideologies, to come together to learn, discuss, and debate the issues they face as individuals and active members of the Jewish community.

Core to our program are a remarkable faculty, forty committed Fellows from Jewish communities around the world per cohort, and a beautifully serene setting that offers participants the space to explore fundamental questions about Jewish identity and Global Jewish Connectedness.

The results, as evidenced in this report, researched by respected independent evaluators Dr. Pearl Beck and Dr. Jack Ukeles, show that the Nahum Goldmann Fellowship works to connect young Jews, provide them with intensive Jewish learning, inspire them to be more Jewishly and communally involved and offer them leadership tools they can bring to their home communities.

These findings have inspired us to redouble our efforts to reach more emerging Jewish leaders internationally and create more opportunities for past participants of the NGF. We are committed to affording NGF Fellows more places to connect and learn together as well as more training during their forays into leadership positions in their home communities.

We gratefully acknowledge Dr. Nahum Goldmann z"l and Dr. Jerry Hochbaum, whose vision led to the creation of the NGF. As always, we thank our international Board of Trustees for their wise counsel and support. We deeply appreciate the dedication of the staff of the MFJC who help to coordinate each Nahum Goldmann Fellowship and who will lead our efforts to translate these findings into new and improved offerings.

Finally, we thank our global Network of Fellows, hundreds of whom took the time to complete the survey. Their passion, commitment and courage serve as our inspiration.

Marlene Bethlehem

President, MFJC

Rabbi Jeni. S Friedman

Executive Vice President



LINK. LEARN. LEAD.

The International Nahum Goldman Fellowship is the signature program of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, an international non-profit, founded by Dr. Nahum Goldman z"l, dedicated to the revival of Jewish cultural life around the world after the Shoah. From its inception, the MFJC has been committed to supporting scholarship and leadership from all geographic, denominational, and ideological sectors of Jewish life. For the past 30 years, the NGF has brought together the diverse voices of emerging Jewish leaders from communities around the world to serve as a microcosm of the Jewish people.

In 2017, in honor of the 30th anniversary of the NGF, the MFJC conducted an extensive evaluation to understand the long term impact of the Nahum Goldman Fellowship on past participants. The study indicated that the International Nahum Goldman Fellowship is indeed helping emerging Jewish lay leaders and professionals: to connect more broadly across the Jewish world; to engage with serious Jewish learning; and to return to their home communities prepared to engage in greater leadership roles. The effects of the program are summarized in three key areas in which the NGF succeeds: Link. Learn. Lead.

This report delves deeper into the key findings from interviews and surveys conducted with past participants of the International NGF between 1997-2017.

The Executive Summary can be found on our website www.ngfp.org





According to the study, which was comprised of qualitative and quantitative research, the International Nahum Goldmann Fellowship

Links Fellows:

1

The research demonstrates that the International Nahum Goldmann Fellowship forges powerful and sustained connections between Jews of varied ideological, geographic and religious orientations.

2

Gives Fellows the opportunity to Learn:

The research indicates that the Fellows emerge from the NGF not only better educated, but more excited about pursuing further Jewish education after the Fellowship.

3

Provides Fellows with tools to Lead:

The research reveals that the NGF has a measurable impact on the leadership trajectory of Fellowship alumni.

THE STORY BY THE NUMBERS

1000+ Fellows

from communities, large and small, across the globe have participated in the NGF. Since 1997, 884 Fellows have participated in 22 NGFs

70+ Countries

have sent Fellows to the International NGF, including Iran, Singapore, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Morocco and Macedonia

75+

acclaimed Jewish scholars, thought leaders and activists have taught at the NGF

538 women and 531 men (~50% each)

have participated, representing the myriad ideological, political and denominational diversity that exists within global Jewry

435 Lay Leaders/Volunteers (49%)

449 Jewish Professionals (51%)

HOW THE INTERNATIONAL NGF WORKS

Each week-long International NGF offers a combination of formal and informal adult education opportunities for participants. Based upon a unifying theme chosen each year to reflect contemporary concerns and conversations, Jewish scholars from around the world present lectures and workshops, allowing Fellows to experience robust formal Jewish learning about contemporary issues. Informal education takes place in small groups, where Fellows share insights and experiences from their home communities, as well as through Fellow-led electives about a current professional or personal interest. Each NGF cohort is comprised of approximately 40 participants from Jewish communities worldwide, across denominations and ideologies.

Past themes include: *The People & The Land; Global Jewish Communities in Transformation; Imperatives for Global Jewish Leadership; The Global Jewish Community; and Towards a Global Jewish Society*



SHABBAT

Although the NGF has no denominational or ideological affiliation, a key experience of the program is the group Shabbat (Sabbath) celebration. For some Fellows, this is their first opportunity to participate in rituals such as lighting Shabbat candles, attending services, and engaging in text study.



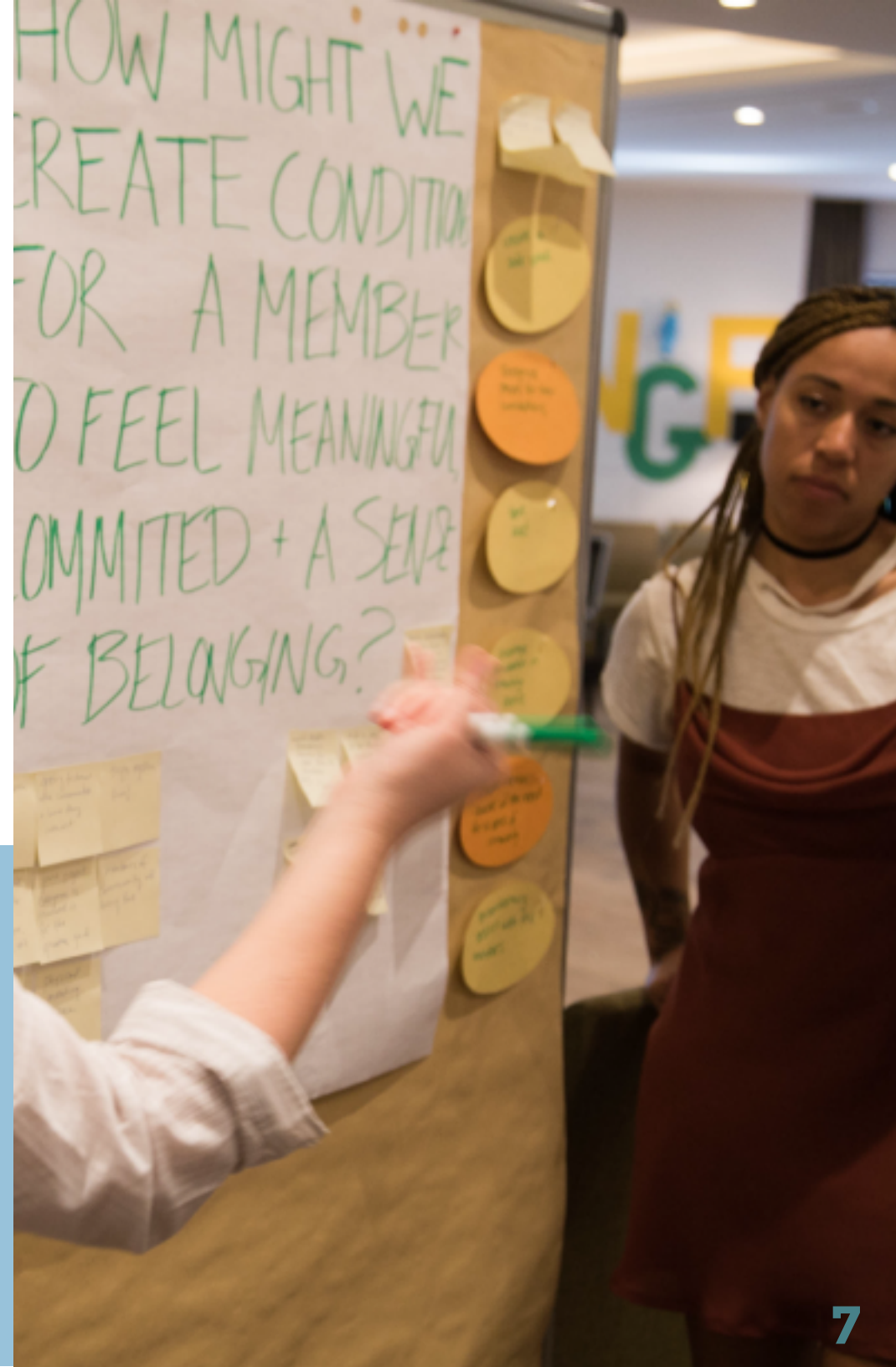
“Shabbat together was amazing, especially because most other initiatives purporting to promote dialogue and pluralism are unwilling or unable to risk uniting everyone for prayer and Shabbat.”

“I gave my first D'var Torah. Being a non-observant Jew, raised in a non-observant community, it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for me.”

OPPORTUNITIES TO KEEP LINKING, LEARNING AND LEADING

The NGF is a global program, with the stated intent of increasing the social capital and connectedness of the Jewish world. Through the International NGF, its regional iterations and its expanding network of alumni, who can access online learning and leadership opportunities throughout the year, the program nurtures global Jewish social capital and connectedness. It is one of very few programs with a true global reach—investing in young Jews from countries with Jewish communities large and small.

“It is an environment where I feel comfortable having a different point of view and listening to a different point of view.”



ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The research was conducted in January and February of 2018 by Dr. Pearl Beck and Dr. Jack Ukeles, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Prior to designing the online survey, researchers conducted twelve individual interviews with a range of Fellows who participated in the program during the past ten years.

567 Fellows surveyed

who participated in NGF from 1997 through 2017, including both lay leaders/volunteers and professionals.

60% response rate

340 Fellows out of 567 Fellows completed the online survey.

50% male and 50% female respondents

from a wide range of geographic regions.

WHY DO FELLOWS APPLY TO THE NGF?

“Network with other Jewish leaders”

74% “Very Important”

“Meet Jews from around the world”

70% “Very Important”

“Engage in Jewish learning”

55% “Very Important”

“Acquire Jewish leadership skills”

51% “Very Important”

A photograph of a group of people at a conference. In the foreground, a woman with curly hair and glasses is smiling and gesturing with her hand. She is wearing a blue lanyard with 'MRJC NGF' printed on it. Behind her, a man in a maroon shirt is also smiling and gesturing. To the right, a woman with long dark hair is looking towards the man. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people at the event.

KEY FINDINGS

LINK. LEARN. LEAD.



LINK

The research demonstrates that the International Nahum Goldmann Fellowship forges powerful and sustained connections between Jews of varied ideological, geographic and religious orientations.

The NGF believes in the inherent value of Klal Yisrael: its heritage, history and culture. The program encourages individual Jewish expression, informed by engagement with serious Jewish scholarship and with other young Jews of differing cultural, religious, and political identities.

“We were a group of leaders from every corner of the globe with every possible political mindset, thrown into a room for a week just to discuss our differences, and from that seemingly chaotic mixture, we actually grew to understand more of what holds us together than pushes us apart. We entered with preconceived notions of the ‘other’ side and left as a strong network of Jewish leaders.”



LEARN

The research indicates that the Fellows emerge from the NGF not only better educated, but more excited about pursuing further Jewish education after the Fellowship.

Jewish learning is a fundamental part of every international and regional NGF. The NGF Faculty come from around the world and represent not only the highest echelon of global Jewish scholarship but also the broadest range of Jewish life and practice. The NGF was created to look deeply and seriously at the big questions facing the next generation of the Jewish world and Jewish leadership: Why be Jewish? How is Jewish identity shifting? What is the role of Israel in fostering Jewish identity? How can Israel and the Diaspora find a common Jewish language?

These issues are addressed through a wide scholarly perspective. The NGF faculty act as teachers and mentors during and well beyond the program. See a complete list of all our past faculty members in Appendix C.

“The NGF helped me to develop my understanding and my perception of Judaism to the next level. I was exposed to an incredible array of active, thinking, perceptive individuals from all streams of religiosity and experiences who helped me to develop critical thinking and the ability to articulate my identity. Although it was only a short time, I count my time at the NGF as one of the pivotal, formative experiences in my Jewish life.”

LEAD

The Nahum Goldmann Fellowship has a measurable impact on the leadership trajectory of Fellowship alumni.

“What stands out so many years later is the fellowship, being together with a diverse group of activists and thinkers who share a commitment to the Jewish future and Jewish meaning.”



Jewish leadership activities were found to have increased most among Fellows from the following regions: Africa, Australia and Western Europe.

Some examples of how alumni have increased Jewish leadership activities:

- founded a new organization or program
- transitioned from lay leader to professional leader
- advanced as a local leader
- assumed top lay leadership position
- promoted to more responsible professional position
- increased time devoted to lay leadership
- segued from local leader to global leader
- implemented new and creative Jewish programming

81%

felt the Fellowship made them feel “Very Much” part of a global Jewish community.

70%

stated that the NGF helped them feel that, despite the differences among the Fellows, we are all “Very Much”, one people.

54%

of those with slightly weaker Jewish backgrounds “became more interested in Jewish learning”.

42%

have increased their Jewish leadership activities since participating in NGF.

84%

attributed this increase to their participation in the NGF.



“One of the highlights of my NGF experience was hearing about communities from other places in the world that were also small and trying to grow. When you feel alone in your corner of the world it is an inspiring experience to connect with other like-minded individuals and brainstorm and discuss ideas and share our stories with each other. This connection was the best for me.”

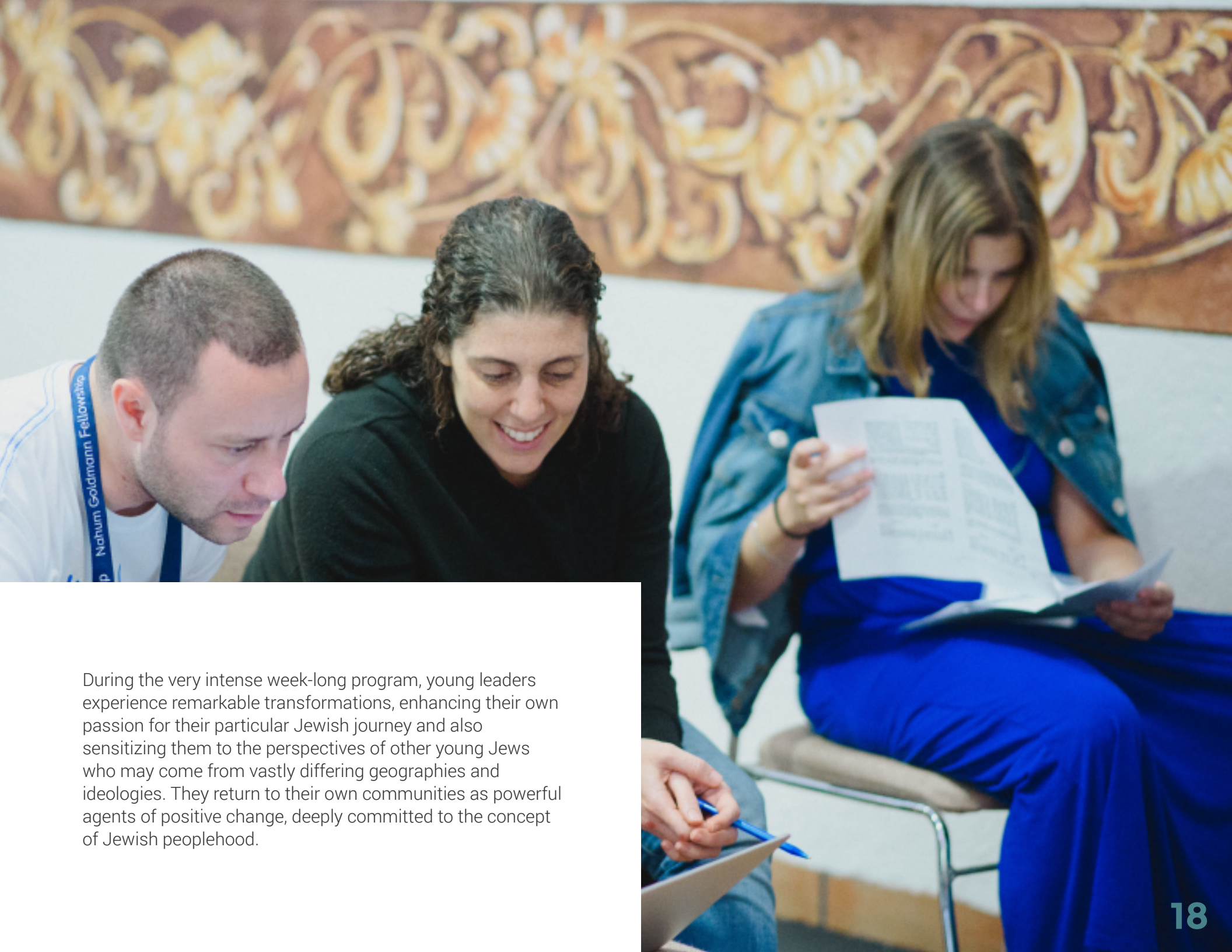
“The program makes the participants do two things: on the one hand deepen his or her own Jewish identity and on the other hand, you have to be pluralistic. And the tension between being pluralistic and having a deep, significant, meaningful Jewish identity is a wonderful thing that will allow the Jewish people to thrive.”

–NGF Faculty Member

A platform for lifelong friendships, professional associations and inspired Jewish learning, the NGF enables colleagues across the globe to learn from each other and to apply lessons from the NGF in their own communities.

50% indicated that the NGF affected what they “do as Jewish leaders” to a “transformative extent” or to “a considerable extent”.





During the very intense week-long program, young leaders experience remarkable transformations, enhancing their own passion for their particular Jewish journey and also sensitizing them to the perspectives of other young Jews who may come from vastly differing geographies and ideologies. They return to their own communities as powerful agents of positive change, deeply committed to the concept of Jewish peoplehood.

“It was at first glance an important thought exercise in my personal Jewish journey. It has grown into so much more: A growing network of mentors and friends all over the world. Deep, meaningful, and thoughtful scholarly experiences that seek substance and connection. A highly successful model for leadership development of Jewish professionals and lay leaders.”

“That transformative experience allowed me to project myself with even more power towards implementing my ideals and goals of Judaism.”



Being scattered across the globe is part of the richness, diversity, and strength of the modern Jewish people. The Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture (MFJC) promotes global Jewish connectedness by investing in young Jewish leaders from more than 70 nations through the extraordinary Nahum Goldmann Fellowship (NGF).

Today, the MFJC and NGF create connections between Jewish leaders, who would not otherwise interact, through meaningful engagement with Jewish scholarship, and are known for success in supporting and developing the next generation of Jewish scholars around the world.

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APPENDIX A

Nahum Goldmann Fellowship - 1987-2019

NGF 1	August 16-31, 1987	Oxfordshire	U.K.
NGF 2	August 20-29, 1989	Oxfordshire	U.K.
NGF 3	August 12-22, 1991	Zvenigrod	RUSSIA
NGF 4	August 1-12, 1993	Zvenigrod	RUSSIA
NGF 5	August 13-24, 1995	Zvenigrod	RUSSIA
NGF 6	October 20-29, 1996	Sao Paulo	BRAZIL
NGF 7	September 1-11, 1997	Glamsta	SWEDEN
NGF 8	August 23-Sept. 2, 1999	Glamsta	SWEDEN
NGF 9	January 22-Feb. 1, 2001	Sao Paulo	BRAZIL
NGF 10	August 20-29, 2001	Glamsta	SWEDEN
NGF 11	August 5-14, 2002	Melbourne	AUSTRALIA
NGF 12	August 19-27, 2003	Glamsta	SWEDEN
NGF 13	December 9-17, 2003	Melbourne	AUSTRALIA
NGF 14	November 8-17, 2004	Montevideo	URUGUAY
NGF 15	February 28-March 6, 2005	Mumbai	INDIA
NGF 16	August 22-31, 2005	Glamsta	SWEDEN
NGF 17	February 13-21, 2006	Cape Town	S. AFRICA
NGF 18*	November 23-27, 2006	Melbourne	AUSTRALIA
NGF 19	June 4-13, 2007	Kinneret	ISRAEL
NGF 20	February 6-12, 2008	Montevideo	URUGUAY
NGF 21	February 16-24, 2009	Kinneret	ISRAEL
NGF 22	March 8-15, 2010	Pag	CROATIA
NGF 23	June 12-19, 2011	Kinneret	ISRAEL
NGF 24	July 3-9, 2012	Warsaw	POLAND
NGF 25	June 11-17, 2013	Kinneret	ISRAEL
NGF 26	June 10-16, 2014	Montevideo	URUGUAY
NGF 27	June 15-21, 2015	Kinneret	ISRAEL
NGF 28	June 19-27, 2016	Cuernavaca	MEXICO
NGF 29	June 4-12, 2017	Kinneret	ISRAEL
NGF 30	August 5-12, 2018	Hanover	GERMANY
NGF 31	June 16-23, 2019	Kinneret	ISRAEL

Regional Nahum Goldmann Fellowship

September 2005	Tehran	IRAN
November 23-27, 2006	Melbourne	AUSTRALIA
October 22-23, 2009	Cape Town	S. AFRICA
March 27-29, 2011	Ottawa	CANADA
March 26-27, 2011	Cape Town	S. AFRICA
December 15-17, 2011	Ohalo	ISRAEL
January 27-29, 2013	Sao Paulo	BRAZIL
January 18-20, 2015	Copenhagen	DENMARK
February 14-16, 2016	Havana	CUBA
May 3-6, 2018	Cape Town	S. AFRICA
March 10-12, 2019	Reisterstown	U.S.A.

APPENDIX B

NGF ALUMNI BY COUNTRY 8/18

TOTAL: 1066

Argentina	64	Italy	10
Australia	68	Kazakstan	4
Austria	2	Latvia	3
Azerbaijhan	4	Lithuania	4
Belarus	5	Luxembourg	2
Belgium	4	Macedonia	3
Bosnia & Herzegovina	1	Mexico	17
Brazil	62	Morocco	2
Bulgaria	9	New Zealand	5
Canada	37	Norway	11
Chile	13	Panama	4
Colombia	4	Paraguay	3
Costa Rica	3	Peru	3
Croatia	9	Poland	13
Cuba	2	Portugal	2
Curacao	1	Romania	2
Czech Rep.	8	Russia	57
Denmark	14	Serbia & Montenegro	6
Dom. Rep	1	Singapore	3
Estonia	4	Slovak Rep.	3
Finland	3	South Africa	85
France	24	Spain	6
Georgia	3	Sweden	14
Germany	16	Switzerland	9
Greece	3	The Netherlands	21
Guatemala	2	Turkey	14
Hong Kong	2	Ukraine	22
Hungary	19	United Kingdom	44
India	23	Uruguay	15
Iran	7	USA	115
Ireland	1	Venezuela	4
Israel	141	Yugoslavia	1

APPENDIX C

NGF FACULTY 1987-2018

Prof. Irving Abella
Prof. Mordechai Altshuler
Prof. Ziva Amishai-Maisels
Prof. Aharon Applefeld, z"l
Prof. Robert John Aumann
Prof. Haim Avni
Prof. Sylvia Barack-Fishman
Dr. Steven Bayme
Prof. Ella Belfer
Prof. Saul Berman
Dr. Daniela Blonder
Rabbi Menachem Bombach
Dr. Jonathan Boyd
Prof. Herman Branover z"l
Dr. Ruth Calderon
Dr. Mikhail Chlenov
Prof. Steven M. Cohen
Dr. Stephen Donshik
Prof. Yechezkel Dror
Rabbi Mordechai Edery
Prof. Arnold Eisen
Prof. David Ellenson
Rabbi Tamar Elad Appelbaum
Rabba Yaffa Epstein

Prof. Menachem Elon
Prof. Daniel Fainstein
Prof. Charlotte Fonrobert
Prof. Maurice Friedberg
Prof. Saul Friedlander
Dr. Tova Ganzel
Prof. Ruth Gavison
Prof. Zvi Gitelman
Prof. Eric Goldman
Dr. Ivo Goldstein
Dr. Micah Goodman
Prof. Arthur Green
Mr. Gidi Grinstein
Prof. Moshe Halbertal
Dr. Nelly Hansson
Mr. David Harris
Prof. Arthur Hertzberg, z"l
Prof. Benjamin Ish-Shalom
Dr. Svetlana Jebrak
Mr. Mendel Kaplan, z"l
Prof. Samuel Kassow
Prof. Steven T. Katz
Prof. Reuven Kimelman
Dr. Mikhail Krutikov

Prof. James Kugel
Dr. Aliza Lavie
Prof. Adriane Leveen
Prof. Deborah E. Lipstadt
Prof. Ingrid Lomfors
Prof. Zeev Mankowitz
Dr. Vivian Mann
Prof. Jose Meiches
Prof. David N. Myers
Ms. Peta Pellach
Dr. Channa Pinchasi
Ms. Dorit Price-Levine
Prof. Ada Rapoport-Albert
Prof. Aviezer Ravitzky
Mr. Gerhart Riegner
Prof. Avinoam Rosenak
Prof. Michael Rosenak, z"l
Prof. Shalom Rosenberg
Dr. Rina Rosenberg
Prof. David Roskies
Prof. Moshe Rosman
Prof. Jonathan D. Sarna
Dr. Jacob J. Schacter
Mrs. Yocheved Schacter

Prof. Ismar Schorsch
Prof. Jonathan Schorsch
Prof. Eliezer Schweid
Prof. Hagai Segal
Prof. Dan Segre z"l
Prof. Anita Shapira
Mr. Natan Sharansky
Mr. Marc Simon
Prof. Uriel Simon
Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz
Prof. Manuel Tenenbaum, z"l
Mr. Eliahu Toker
Prof. Ilan Troen
Dr. Ethan Tucker
Dr. Jack Ukeles
Prof. Jonathan Webber
Prof. Jack Wertheimer
Prof. Steven Windmueller
Prof. Ruth Wisse
Lt. General Moshe Yaalon
Rabbi Dr. Felipe Yafe
Dr. Moti Zeira
Prof. Yael Zerubavel
Dr. Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg