



**THE GENESIS PRIZE FOUNDATION AND JEWISH FUNDERS NETWORK
TO FUND 22 PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES IN JEWISH LIFE**

***RECIPIENTS OF MATCHING GRANTS ANNOUNCED IN HONOR OF
2016 GENESIS PRIZE LAUREATE ITZHAK PERLMAN***

NEW YORK (June 13, 2017) –The [Genesis Prize Foundation \(GPF\)](#) and [Jewish Funders Network \(JFN\)](#) today announced the recipients of funding under the special matching grants program created in honor of 2016 Genesis Prize Laureate Itzhak Perlman. The announcement identified 22 organizations as grantees of *Breaking Barriers*, which will fund programs that promote inclusion of those with disabilities in Jewish life. The projects will result in \$3.17M in new funds being dedicated to this philanthropic area.

“Together with Itzhak Perlman, we aim to improve the lives of tens of thousands of people with disabilities throughout North America, Israel and the FSU,” said Stan Polovets, Co-Founder and Chairman of the Genesis Prize Foundation. “Itzhak’s personal story illustrates humankind’s ability to achieve greatness in the face of adversity. We want to give others an opportunity to achieve their own greatness by enjoying lives filled with dignity, respect, and personal fulfillment.”

This is the second consecutive year that GPF and JFN have conducted a matching grant initiative in honor of a Genesis Prize Laureate. Last year’s matching grant initiative in honor of the 2015 Laureate Michael Douglas resulted in \$3.3M in new funds contributed to projects focused on engaging intermarried families in Jewish life.

World-renowned violinist and activist for those with disabilities, Itzhak Perlman, received the 2016 Genesis Prize at a ceremony in Jerusalem. In lieu of accepting the prize money, he directed the funds to promote inclusion of those with disabilities in Jewish life, as well as to support young people pursuing careers in classical music.

Some of the winning organizations due to receive funding from the Genesis Prize/JFN initiative include:

- **Hillel International**, which is recruiting interns on college campuses around the world who will engage students with disabilities in Jewish life
- **Judith Creed Homes for Adult Independence**, which will expand its JCHAI Transitions, an after-school and weekend program for individuals 18-30 which teaches skills, develops Jewish identity, and helps develop social networks for participants

- **Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles**, which is implementing a comprehensive new project that will develop an inclusion workshop series, inclusion institutes, community gatherings and an online inclusion resource center

The full list of recipients is available in the Background section.

“I was honored to receive the Genesis Prize in 2016, and so grateful that the award funds were directed in three critical areas,” commented Itzhak Perlman. “To organizations that are making sure people with disabilities are included in Jewish life, to provide access for those with disabilities to cultural programs, and to support aspiring musicians pursuing their passion.”

By directing the \$1M award funds to important philanthropic causes, Perlman followed the tradition of Genesis Prize Laureates who came before him. Michael Bloomberg, the inaugural 2014 Laureate, directed the \$1M award to provide funding for the Genesis Generation Challenge, a competition for young social entrepreneurs working on projects to improve the lives of thousands throughout the world in areas of healthcare, sanitation, and technology. Michael Douglas, the 2015 Laureate, directed his \$1M prize award, along with another \$1M matched by philanthropist Roman Abramovich, to initiatives which engage intermarried families in Jewish life. The 2017 Genesis Prize Laureate Anish Kapoor will direct his prize award to help alleviate the refugee crisis.

“The impact of this initiative goes beyond these grants,” said Andrés Spokoiny, President and CEO of JFN. “The gifts being matched, as well as the whole range of amazing projects submitted, represent new donors and newly increased levels of giving to this vital field. I want to express my gratitude to the Genesis Prize Foundation and its partner, philanthropist Roman Abramovich, who were inspired by Itzhak Perlman to support this critically important initiative that will have a transformative effect on Jewish life.”

About The Genesis Prize

The Genesis Prize seeks to recognize individuals who have attained excellence and international renown in their chosen professional fields, and who inspire others through their dedication to the Jewish community and Jewish values. The Prize, in the amount of \$1M, is endowed by the Genesis Prize Foundation and awarded annually. www.genesisprize.org

About Jewish Funders Network (JFN)

JFN is an international organization dedicated to maximizing the quality and impact of Jewish philanthropy. Our members include independent philanthropists, foundation trustees and foundation professionals. JFN leverages the power and the creativity of networks to produce change in the world. The Matching Grants Initiatives of JFN are part of an innovative strategy to increase the base contributions of donors for a given field of Jewish philanthropy. Since their inception in 2004, matching grants have generated over \$90 million in new funding for Jewish causes. For more information please go to www.jfunders.org.

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BACKGROUND

The goal of *Breaking Barriers* was to identify and fund organizations and projects that foster inclusion of people with disabilities in Jewish life.

The initiative's review committee received 54 applications representing over 70 unique funders. The 22 winning recipients span 19 cities. Each of the organization's projects will run for up to two years, with periodic assessments of their success and impact to be submitted to JFN.

The following is a full list of grant recipients:

Association of Jewish Family & Children's Agencies

(AJFCA)

Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies

Congregation B'nai Amoona

Congregation Shaar Hashomayim

DANI (Developing and Nurturing Independence)

Etta Israel Center

Hillel International

JBI International

JCC Manhattan

Jewish Child and Family Services

Jewish Community Center of San Francisco

Jewish Family Service & Children's Center of Clifton/Passaic

Jewish Family Service of MetroWest New Jersey

Jewish Family Service of Seattle

Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles

Jewish Learning Venture

Judith Creed Homes for Adult Independence (JCHAI)

Kadima Jewish Support Services for Adults with Mental Illness

MetroWest Jewish Day School

National Ramah Commission

RespectAbility

The Marion & Aaron Gural JCC

A portion of Itzhak Perlman's Genesis Prize award was directed to a competition administered by Matan (an affiliate of the United Way) to distribute grants for organizations supporting those with disabilities in Israel. The results of the competition were announced on April 2, 2017 at a ceremony in Jerusalem hosted by the Prime Minister of Israel. In total, almost \$2M was distributed in Israel. The bulk of the sum was awarded to 14 winning projects, including the Israel Museum, Beit Issie Shapiro, and the Nalaga'at Theater. An additional grant was also provided to the Perlman-Genesis Strings Project, a five-year Tel Aviv Conservatory program for outstanding young string musicians.

In addition to grants distributed in North America and Israel, Genesis Prize Foundation made a significant gift in honor of Mr. Perlman to the Maccabi World Union in order to bring Russian Jewish Paralympic athletes to the 20th Maccabiah Games in Israel this July. This gift was made possible due to the contribution of Roman Abramovich and his wife Dasha Zhukova.