

Israel Experience

A Program of the Jewish Community Foundation

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Israel Experience Program?

- The Foundation is seeking to encourage Jewish high school students to have an immersive Israel experience. To that end, the Foundation is offering a limited number of scholarships worth up to \$6,000 per student for programs in Israel lasting anywhere from 4 weeks to one semester.

2. How do I know if I qualify?

- All Jewish high school students who will be entering grades 10-12 the school year following their travel to Israel and who are residents of Greater Hartford are eligible to apply. (please see appendix 1 for a list of towns)
- Students who have never traveled to Israel and demonstrate a financial need receive first priority for scholarships. Rising seniors will have priority over all applicants in this group. If additional scholarships remain available, students who have traveled to Israel and/or do not demonstrate financial need will then have an opportunity to receive a scholarship.
- Submission of financial information is optional and will be kept strictly confidential. The Foundation looks at overall financial circumstances and not parental income alone. We encourage you to indicate any financial circumstances that may affect your family's ability to contribute to your trip.

3. What is the definition of a Jewish student?

- The student must have at least one Jewish parent or have converted to Judaism
- The student must identify with the Jewish faith at time application is made

4. Will everyone who applies receive a scholarship?

- Our goal is to enable every Jewish student in Greater Hartford the opportunity for an immersive Israel travel experience; however, for now we have between 5-10 total scholarships available.

5. So what if more people apply than there are available scholarships?

- We will have a random drawing of qualified applicants (based upon their priority ranking). We will award the maximum available based upon our criteria.

6. Is this program the same as the RootOne Incentive program?

- RootOne (www.rootone.org) is a separate program that offers a \$3,000 grant on a first-come, first-served basis with certain qualified trips. You must contact your trip provider to see if they participate and if you are eligible for this grant. It should be noted that the Jewish Community Foundation scholarship are the last dollars in after all other grants, aid and scholarships received by a student.

7. What expenses does the JCF Scholarship cover?

- The JCF Scholarship can be applied toward tuition and airfare, and must be paid directly to the trip provider. All other costs (travel insurance, spending money, etc.) are not covered by the Scholarship.

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8. Can I choose which program I would like to go on?

- Yes! We want you to find the program that is right for you. We have a list of pre-approved programs (appendix 2). If you do not see your program listed, please e-mail grants@jcfhartford.org and provide information (including a website) on your program. The Foundation will determine its eligibility.

9. What if I am interested in a program that is less than 4 weeks?

- Priority is given to immersive 4 week to 1 semester programs. If funds are still available after all students who have requested a scholarship received one, then the Foundation, in its discretion, will consider other requests.

10. How do I apply?

- Simply go to our website (www.jcfhartford.org/israel-experience-scholarships), fill out the application and follow the instructions.

11. Am I required to submit my family's financial information?

- While financial information is not required, our first priority goes to students who demonstrate financial need and have never traveled to Israel previously. You must provide the requested financial data to demonstrate financial need. All information remains confidential.

12. What do I need to do other than apply?

- You must agree to the following requirements:
 - Participate in a pre-and post-education program through JT Connect (the classes will be offered at no charge to scholarship recipients).
 - Complete 10 hours of community service for a Greater Hartford Jewish organization
 - Serve as an ambassador for Israel travel. This includes speaking to a minimum of two groups (i.e. your synagogue and youth groups) about your Israel experience and the Foundation scholarship program.

13. What is the Pre and Post-educational program?

- JT Connect will conduct multi-session pre-educational and post-educational classes. All recipients are required to take these classes. The educational program consists of 3 classes: 2 pre-trip and 1 post-trip.

14. What if I am unable to participate in the educational programs?

- All recipients are required to participate. If you are unable, then your scholarship will go to another student unless an alternate solution is approved by the Foundation (hint: conflicts with other extracurricular activities do not warrant finding alternate solutions!).

15. What are the requirements of community service?

- All participants must complete a minimum of 10 hours of community service for a Greater Hartford Jewish organization (or organizations) of your choosing. This can happen before or after your trip, but must be completed no more than 2 months after your return.
- While we encourage participation in Jewish youth groups, please note that your activity as a member of a youth group does not count towards community services.
- Once your service is completed, you must provide a signed letter from the organization confirming your completion of the 10 hour minimum community service requirement.

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Appendix A: Preapproved Trip Providers

- Alexander Muss High School in Israel
- BBYO Passport
- Benai Akiva
- Camp Michah
- Cohen Camps Dor L'Dor
- NCSY Summer
- NFTY in Israel
- Ramah Israel Seminar
- TRY/USY High
- URJ Heller High
- USY Israel Pilgrimage
- Young Judea Summer Programs

If you do not see your program listed, please provide information to the Foundation by sending an e-mail to grants@jcfhartford.org.

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Appendix B: Greater Hartford Area Towns

Avon
Berlin
Bloomfield
Canton
East Granby
East Hartford
Ellington
Enfield
Farmington
Glastonbury
Granby
Hartford
Manchester
Meriden
Middletown
New Britain
Newington
Plainville
Rockville
Rocky Hill
Simsbury
Somers
Southington
South Windsor
Stafford Springs
Suffield
Tolland
Vernon
West Hartford
Wethersfield
Windsor
Windsor Locks