



# 2024

## ANNUAL REPORT

  
ROSSING CENTER  
FOR EDUCATION AND DIALOGUE  
מרכז רוסינג  
לחינוך ולדיאלוג  
מרכז רוסינג  
للتربية وللحوار

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# Letter from Executive Director

As we reflect on the past year, I am both humbled and inspired by the dedication of our team at the Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue. The challenges we faced in 2024, marked by the ongoing efforts to return the Israeli hostages and the utter devastation in Gaza, underscore the urgency and importance of our mission. In the face of deepening divisions and escalating violence, our work has been an enduring source of hope, fostering understanding and collaboration across communities.

This year, we took significant strides in our efforts to create systemic change within the education system. Our partnerships with school principals have been at the heart of this endeavor, empowering them to cultivate inclusive environments that nurture dialogue and mutual respect. By working at this pivotal level, we are sowing seeds of transformation that will resonate throughout generations to come.

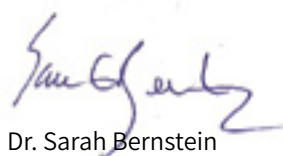
Our groundbreaking trauma-informed Healing Hatred methodology has seen a remarkable surge in demand, both within Israel-Palestine and globally. This innovative approach, which bridges deep psychological wounds to foster reconciliation, has proven to be a powerful tool in healing fractured relationships. The growing interest in this methodology speaks to its relevance and potential to contribute to peacebuilding efforts worldwide.

Another milestone was the release of our comprehensive report on the harassment of Christian communities in Jerusalem. This report not only shed light on a pressing issue but also sparked meaningful conversations locally and internationally, drawing attention to the need for greater protection and interfaith collaboration in this sacred city.

Just as important has been our resolve to reinforce our organizational resilience. Working amidst conflict calls for unwavering commitment, and I am deeply proud of our team's ability to rise to the challenge, adapt, and continue delivering transformative programs. Together, we have reinforced the Rossing Center's role as a dependable partner for peace and dialogue during the toughest of times.

None of this would have been possible without your generous support and belief in our mission. As we look ahead to 2025, we carry with us the lessons and achievements of this year, determined to deepen our impact and broaden our reach. Thank you for standing with us on this journey toward a more just and compassionate society.

With gratitude and hope,



Dr. Sarah Bernstein





# Mission & Impact



Since 2006, the Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue has been a leading interreligious organization in the peacebuilding field. **Our mission is to build the desire and capacity of Israelis and Palestinians to create truly shared societies for all religious, ethnic and national groups. We aim to achieve this by teaching values of inclusivity within the Israeli education system, and by giving Arabs and Jews the tools to make mixed spaces more equitable.** Each year, our team engages thousands of teachers, principals, tour guides, and other practitioners through meaningful encounters and skill-building activities, better positioning them to educate the next generation.

Academic research in social-psychology conducted by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's aChord Center produced the four guiding principles of effective shared-society education:

- Development of open, pluralistic identities

- Sensitivity to inequality and injustice
- Tolerance of difference
- Preparedness to live side-by-side in an atmosphere of inclusivity

In order to achieve systemic change, we partner with a wide range of institutions across the public sector and civil society who subsequently embed our methodologies in their own curricula. All our work is designed to challenge the status quo and transform the power imbalances currently embedded in Israeli society. Because religious tropes are frequently used to fuel nationalist violence, we believe religion has a crucial role to play in reversing this dynamic and contributing instead to understanding the 'other' as a whole – composed of their religious, cultural, and national narratives and identities, as well as their traditions, beliefs and practices.





**6,400**

School principals, teachers, tour guides,  
other professionals, and students



**120**

Private and public institutions working in  
cooperation with the Rossing Center

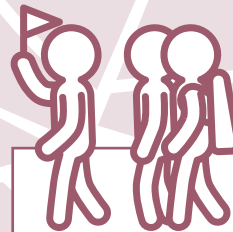


**70,000**

Online users from around the world engaged  
in our digital educational content

**100**

High school teachers equipped with tools for  
countering racism, fostering critical thinking  
and the ability to facilitate dialogue across  
difference in the classroom.



**450**

Tour guides-in-training learned about the  
complexity of Jewish-Christian relations in  
Israel and the multi-layered issues facing  
Christian communities in the Holy Land.



The Rossing Center was honored to receive an  
award from INTR<sup>o</sup>A Interreligiöse Arbeitsstelle  
und Netzwerk recognizing our commitment to  
interreligious dialogue and peacebuilding. Dr.  
Sarah Bernstein accepted the award on behalf  
of the organization, delivering a 15-minute  
presentation on our work promoting a better  
vision for the Holy Land.





# Education Department

## Overview

**Our Education Department aims to change the Israeli education system holistically, so that peace and shared society education are embedded in curricula, and educators at all levels are equipped to teach the values and skills necessary to build an equal, peaceful society. Approved by the Ministry of Education, our education programs target principals, teachers and teachers-in-training, who act as ‘multipliers,’ reaching thousands of students as they educate the next generation of Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel.**

In 2024, we created the **Educational Leadership Forum** bringing together Jewish and Palestinian high school and primary school principals from across the country. This bi-national forum enables the sharing of experiences, challenges, and new ideas. The first cohort of 8 high school and 5 primary

school principals met in November and December 2024. Their first session focused on relationship-building and setting expectations, with a strong emphasis on the importance of Arabic language and Palestinian identity in educational spaces. Acknowledging these elements as fundamental to an inclusive society helped create a foundation of mutual understanding and respect among the principals. The second session featured Dr. Ameer Fakhouri, whose expertise in political and cultural sociology provided invaluable insights into the complexities of shared society dynamics. His thought-provoking discussion encouraged participants to reflect on their roles as educators and leaders in shaping a more inclusive and equitable future.

Our **Educating for Change [Ed4C]** program continued its work in teacher-training institutions and high schools, and other educational institutions:



- **Jewish:** Branco Weiss Herzog high school in Mazkeret Batya, Branco Weiss Herzog high school in Beit Hashmonai, Midrasha L'Chaim Meshutafim gap-year program, Sha'ar La'Adam gap-year program, Ofek gap-year program
- **Mixed:** Hebrew University of Jerusalem teacher-training program
- **Palestinian/Arab:** Beit Berl Academic College teacher-training program, Sindiana Youth Village high school, Al-Karma high school, Ort Abu Tlul high school in the Negev region

***“As a leader, I feel a responsibility to promote solutions where problems exist in Israeli society. Educators like us have the power to influence policy-makers to create lasting change beyond our own communities.”***

*-School principal*

## **Coalition of Organizations working in Shared Society Education**

The Rossing Center has continued its role as a significant player in the coalition originally formed under the previous government's Education Ministry advising them on matters of shared society education. Following on from the critical resource we published at the end of 2023, “Teachers’ Guide for Managing Sensitive Conversations in the Classroom During Times of Crisis,” our Education Department staff was once again invited in March 2024 to assist coalition partner Abraham Initiatives in developing and facilitating a training session on this theme for over 100 teachers across the country. Meanwhile, at the request of the Ministry of Education, we produced an additional guide focused on assisting teachers in the mixed cities of Ramle and Lod to facilitate classroom discussions in Jewish schools with a small minority of Arab students. In August 2024, coalition partner Givat Haviva invited

Educating for Change Director, Reut Ben Horin, to conduct a seminar for 30 Jewish teachers teaching in Arab schools.

Most state schools felt pressure to catch up and complete the 2023-2024 curriculum which was disrupted by the war, and therefore refrained from participating in supplementary programming. However, the Christian schools network welcomed the entry of our **Foundations for Partnership [F4P]** program in early 2024, and greatly appreciated the socio-emotional support it offered, given the even more than usual complex status and identity of Palestinian citizens of Israel at this point in time. F4P worked with 14 teachers in 7 schools and their students – some 440 eleven and twelve year-olds in Haifa, Nazareth, Ramle, Jaffa and I'billin. In the process of enriching the teachers' SEL (social-emotional learning) and facilitation skills, project staff focused on introducing new program components – on how to create a ‘safe and open space’ in the classroom, establish a ‘group contract’, and help build the pupils' identity and resilience both individually and as a group.

***“Sometimes it's hard to accept people who are different from us, but it's important for us to have a better world.”***

*-Elementary school student*

With the start of the 2024-2025 academic year, Jewish schools still remained reluctant to participate in programming around issues of shared society, and F4P continued to operate in the Christian schools network which serves Druze, Christian, and Muslim children. While they share common languages and many cultural norms, they nevertheless represent a variety of beliefs which are not always understood, and teachers reported their students expressed great curiosity and a desire to understand the different religions in depth. Many students noted similarities between the principles of religions, especially with regard to moral values and good behavior toward others.





## **Rozan Ailabounie** participating teacher in Foundations for Partnership



My journey with F4P began with a desire to instill certain values in my students, but it quickly evolved into a profound experience of personal and professional growth. Prior to the program, my understanding of shared-society education was much more limited. F4P significantly reshaped my pedagogical approach, providing the tools to empower students to explore their own identities—a crucial precursor to understanding and appreciating diverse perspectives. This self-discovery ignited a genuine curiosity in my students, fostering openness and receptivity towards others. I learned to facilitate meaningful connections, guiding them in identifying commonalities and navigating the complexities of cultural difference. Witnessing 4th-6th graders broaden their perspectives through this innovative methodology was truly inspiring.

Now, structured dialogue is an integral part of my classroom. This framework empowers students to articulate their thoughts freely, practice active listening, and engage in genuine collaboration. Beyond mere tolerance, they displayed a genuine enthusiasm for learning about their classmates' traditions and shared their own with newfound confidence. F4P equipped me to provide them with the language to express their anxieties constructively. The program challenged me to continually refine my teaching practices, and the positive feedback from my students was deeply rewarding. These newly acquired skills and perspectives will undoubtedly shape my career and contribute to the inclusive and respectful learning environment I strive to cultivate. Furthermore, F4P facilitated a professional network of colleagues, providing opportunities for me to connect and exchange ideas with fellow educators.





# Avishay Rubin

participating  
teacher in  
Educating for  
Change



Participating in the Rossing Center's Educating for Change program has been a profound journey for me. Before joining the program, my exposure to navigating conflictual discourse was primarily through interactions, academic degrees, and my experiences in academia.

I decided to join the program because it sounded interesting, and I wanted to learn how to teach sensitive subjects more effectively. I realized that I didn't have all the answers and there was much more to learn. I sought tools to better relate to others, avoid antagonism, and understand the emotional experiences of my students—the pain they come from. My goal was not to forbid certain topics but to guide and direct discussions to practical, concrete places where conversations could continue constructively.

One surprising aspect of the program was the importance of identity. I hadn't fully grasped how crucial it was for students to understand their own identities and the identities of others. This pedagogical aspect of identity—whether to emphasize it or not—was eye-opening. It wasn't always about politics but about recognizing how much identity matters to everyone involved. There is still much more work to do in this area.

A significant challenge was making real-time decisions about rules. I realized I couldn't address everything immediately or delve deeply into every word spoken. It was an interesting test to determine which issues required immediate attention.

In the long term, the most valuable takeaway is the idea that solutions to social issues lie in dialogue itself. Through group processes and discussions, boundaries of conversations are defined, and solutions emerge from listening to what comes up. It's a way to cope, not a magic solution, but it's a powerful tool for fostering understanding and resilience.





# Dialogue Department

## Overview

**Our Dialogue Department projects focus on engaging Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel and Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem to act cohesively together to make the mixed spaces in which they live, work and study, shared and inclusive.**

The Rossing Center's **innovative Healing Hatred methodology for interreligious and intercultural dialogue has become a core component in the structure of our Meeting Place and Open House programs**, and as of the 2024-25 academic year also in our Education Department programming. Healing Hatred is based on the rationale that if we understand and heal trauma and fear, overcome apathy and hatred, and create a vision for the future based on trust and mutual respect; then people can

work together to change public discourse and reality. In these bi-national sessions, participants are exposed to the narratives and lived experiences of 'the Other.' To complement the full group setting, we have incorporated additional uni-national sessions which help participants process the challenging topics that came up, and provide a safe space for them to speak freely about their fears, anger, and concerns.

## Meeting Place & Dialogue Circles at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

In Jerusalem, our Meeting Place program continued its partnership with The Hebrew University of Jerusalem [HUJI] and their Social Involvement and Diversity Units, operating on all three Jerusalem campuses: Ein Kerem – Faculty of Medicine; Givat Ram – Faculty of Maths and Natural Sciences; Mount Scopus





– Faculties of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law. It is of no small significance that three of the seven multicultural activities for students listed on the HUJI Diversity Unit’s Hebrew and Arabic site are operated by the Rossing Center’s Dialogue Department Meeting Place staff and we have provided training to most of the others.

The deep cultural separation between Jewish and Palestinian students in Israel, shaped by a divided education system and mutual ignorance, is intensified by ongoing conflict, leading to heightened fear, mistrust, and hostility between the two groups. Further complicating this context is the fear of Palestinian students (and university personnel) to openly express their feelings regarding the war, since even expressions of sympathy for the civilian losses in Gaza has on occasion brought about suspension threats, which in some cases have been acted on. Meeting Place’s opening session for the 2024-25 academic year addressed this very issue with a presentation by Adv. Samah Darwish, “Between Freedom of Expression and Incitement”

which followed Prof. Hillel Cohen’s talk on the political history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In addition to the regular Meeting Place & Dialogue Circles programming, the following reflect the new directions and partnerships which developed and deepened over 2024.

- The HUJI Accelerator for Social Entrepreneurship invited Meeting Place staff to give a workshop in June on ‘sensitivity to identity’ for students in the program’s Diversity track, who are expected to participate in teams launching diversity and inclusion pilots at the university.
- Meeting Place also held a joint event with the shared society organization, Kulna Jerusalem. Over 60 students attended the event, “Voices of Prayer and Kindness during the Jewish Three Weeks of Mourning and the Muslim Eid Al-Adha” at Kulna’s center in the Abu Tor ‘seamline’ neighborhood between East and West Jerusalem, and participated in three Dialogue Circles discussions groups, enjoying a concluding musical performance by the “Tahrir on Campus” ensemble.







- The Azrieli College of Engineering, which had invited Meeting Place staff following the outbreak of the war to conduct workshops in three of their departments, called on our staff again for guidance on beginning the 2024-25 academic year under the continuing shadow of war and heightened tensions in the city.
- Meeting Place staff were invited to provide training in Healing Hatred methodology for participants in Givat Haviva's facilitator training program.
- Training of facilitators for shared society organizations and institutions, and in promoting shared society activism (beyond the campus) are, in fact, becoming increasingly significant components in the Dialogue Department's Meeting Place programming. The 2024-25 academic year is thus seeing the establishment of an alumni leadership program, as well as the expanded marketing of facilitator training programs adapted to the needs of the individual institutions and organizations.
- In February, the Rossing Center's Director of Dialogue

Facilitation, Gal Eblagon was invited to speak at a special conference held in the Knesset: "Shared Society in the Shadow of the War" in recognition of the emergency initiatives she coordinated together with other civil society leaders in the immediate aftermath of October 7, 2023.

### Open House in the Mixed City of Ramle

Following the outbreak of the war, it was clear that we would need to work with the student groups uni-nationally as the needs of Palestinian and Jewish citizens were so different, and tensions were running so high. In responding to this need, the Open House staff also brought psychologists to each student group to facilitate workshops on mental well-being, personal resilience, and how to cope with the ongoing trauma of the conflict. Later in the spring, participants prepared and led sessions for their group about their own skills or subject of expertise. This opportunity for self-expression and opening up to their uni-national group about themselves and their personal stories overcoming adversity transformed the







students from passive consumers of program content into active and empowered partners in the creative process of the meetings. This also helped prepare them for the bi-national encounters, engendering a willingness to listen to and feel empathy for the ‘Other’ and their respective experiences.

Gradually the students began to address their own feelings and overcome stereotypes and preconceptions, laying the groundwork for their bi-national encounters, which included: a day of volunteering, a dual-narrative tour of Ramle, and another session in which participants jointly processed their experience of the tour. The tour highlighted the economic gaps between the Jewish and Palestinian sectors in the city, stirring the students to consider intersecting issues of neglect and disenfranchisement alongside the political and national struggles. On the tour, participants set foot in the houses of worship of other religions for the first time in their lives, assuaging many fears and calling into question previously held assumptions.

## Highlights

- **Ramle Tours Student Taskforce:** In October 2024, we launched a new mixed-gender cohort in which participants of different religious, ethnic, and national backgrounds took part in a series of trainings on how to guide visitors through the city and present Ramle through a dual-narrative lens. Participants are learning about each other’s past and present in the city through site visits including different houses of worship. Their meetings, held once a week, are facilitated by Muhammad Haddad and Ruti Shuster.
- **In partnership with the Abraham Initiatives, and as part of our Emergency Response, Open House Director Vivian Rabia convened a coalition of 18 local leaders from 10 local Arab civil society organizations** [These include for example, Al Huda, Nashim Demokratiot (Democratic Women), Nur (for girls at risk), Zedek Hevrati (Social Justice) Residents Build Community, among others] who have been meeting twice a month at the Open House to strategize how they can best serve communities in Ramle and Lod.
- **At the national level, Vivian is representing the Open House in a coalition of Arab leaders across Israel’s mixed cities (Acco, Haifa, Ramle, Lod, Jaffa) exploring shared issues and challenges** such as the management of heightened tensions to avoid outbreaks of violence as occurred in 2021.
- **Visitors to the Open House:** While international tourism and pilgrimage was radically impacted by the war, three groups from overseas visited the Open House, as did three local groups.



## Limor Yahav participant at the Open House in Ramle



My name is Limor Yahav, and I have lived in Ramle my entire life. I work as a sales manager at the Israel Post. Before joining the program, my exposure to shared spaces and interactions with people different from me was limited. Living in a mixed city, my kids attend a school with a few Arab students. Growing up in this city for 46 years, I always believed in treating everyone with respect, and made an effort to make others feel good with a smile and a kind word. That was the extent of the interaction with my Arab neighbors.

I decided to join the program while searching for a suitable scholarship. The Open House sounded interesting, and I quickly connected with the people, especially in the women's circle. It felt like a place to grow, share, and connect. I had always been a very private person, but this program helped me realize that I actually enjoy sharing about myself with other people and receiving feedback from them. I cherished the fun activities and deep conversations, and I felt like I found another family. I looked forward to coming to the Open House every week, and I never missed a single session.

One of the most eye-opening moments was taking part in an Iftar meal. I had heard of Ramadan but never understood its significance. Experiencing it firsthand and in turn teaching those present about Jewish fasting traditions was deeply moving. This exchange built a bridge of respect and connection. Through the Open House, I also discovered parts of my city I had never visited before. Though at first I was afraid, I began to feel safe and connected to these areas now that they were no longer unfamiliar to me. Indeed the program was challenging at times – especially during wartime, when tensions were high. Nevertheless, I chose to always see the humanity in each person. The Open House has shown me the potential of bringing people together and has supported me by providing a platform for self-expression. I want to help spread the word about this place because it deserves recognition for the positive impact it has on our community.





## Mousa Bakri

participant in  
Meeting Place  
at the Hebrew  
University of  
Jerusalem

I initially joined Meeting Place because it offered two university credits with no homework – a very attractive deal for a student. However, once the program began, I realized it was a much more powerful learning experience than I had expected. Before joining this group, I already had some minimal experiences interacting with Jewish Israelis, but mostly in transactional settings. During the program though, I made real friends with whom I've stayed connected. I learned a lot about different cultures and shared these experiences with my parents and friends.

At first, it was challenging to have group conversations. I was worried that telling my whole truth might hurt someone else. Our facilitators introduced us to many tools, like 'Sami's House' about active listening and self-awareness, which helped the group define its boundaries. Halfway through the semester, we had the two-day Healing Hatred seminar – that's when things really changed. Each person shared how the conflict affects them personally, while everyone paid close attention and then repeated to the person what they understood and what they didn't. This process helped us open up, respect each other, and more deeply understand each other's backgrounds. Until that point, we hadn't discussed any of our similarities, and the reaction of Jewish participants when they discovered that we actually have some things in common really surprised me.

The main takeaway from the program that will most benefit me in the long-term is that I gained the ability to communicate confidently with my Jewish Israeli peers. In my first year at university, I would sit alone and not talk to anyone. Now, I feel confident speaking to anyone on campus. My thoughts are more organized and I can express myself without shame or fear. Meeting Place was truly a transformative experience for me.







# Jerusalem Center for Jewish-Christian Relations (JCJCR)

The most significant challenge in 2024, according to **JCJCR Director Hana Bendcowsky**, was countering the mainstreaming of rhetoric that would have previously been considered radical or racist, exacerbated in large part by the ongoing war. When presenting to the Jewish Israeli public, this manifested as a lack of willingness by many to even listen to other perspectives – unlike the more accepting approach of international audiences. In more extreme cases, participants expressed openly hostile opinions towards Palestinian Christian citizens of Israel and residents of East Jerusalem. While this problematic trend is certainly disturbing, it stems precisely from the ignorance and extremism our programs aim to mitigate – as reflected in JCJCR’s 2024 core programming with the following target groups:

- Over 1,000 qualified and trainee tour guides at Yad Ben Zvi Institute, the Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa tour guide training schools and Wingate College, and including

those working with the Jerusalem Tower of David; the Jerusalem Inter-Cultural Center’s “Window to Mount Zion” initiative; the Tel Aviv ANU Museum of the Jewish People; and the Union of Tour guides serving abroad;

- Teachers-to-be at the Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology and the Arts, and at Kerem Institute for Teacher Training;
- Youth in programs for excelling students at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute; and in the Ruach Tze’irah (Young Spirit) program,
- Young adults in leadership programs, such as Aderet, Tzahali and Midreshet Ein Prat.
- Government personnel from the Young Diplomatic Corps of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Tourism; Police Force cadets.







Since 2023, as Coordinator for **JCJCR's Advocacy and Education Initiative (AEI)**, **Federica Sasso** has joined Hana in bringing knowledge and awareness to local and international stakeholders regarding the challenges faced by Christians in the State of Israel and East Jerusalem. Based on data pertaining to 2023, collected in collaboration with the Religious Freedom Data Center, created by Yisca Harani, AEI published its first report, "Attacks on Christians in Israel and East Jerusalem" in the spring of 2024, launching it at a press conference held at the University of Notre Dame's Tantur Ecumenical Institute. Leading Israel-based English-language news outlet, The Times of Israel, featured the report on their homepage, garnering widespread visibility.

A digital copy of the report, a video recording of the launch event, and a comprehensive list of articles and posts about the initiative can be accessed at [rossingcenter.org/jcjr](https://rossingcenter.org/jcjr).

JCJCR continued to work tirelessly throughout the year, briefing those in positions of influence and authority on the details

and urgency of these matters. These include the Israeli police, Jerusalem Municipality personnel, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador to the Vatican, as well as several European diplomatic missions, including Religious Affairs personnel at the French Consulate; the Norwegian Embassy; a solidarity mission of the USA Lutheran Church; and a presentation of the report to 16 representatives of the Delegation of the European Union to Israel. In parallel with the outreach efforts, AEI intensively pursued the process of data-gathering with regard to the situation in 2024 and recommendations for action.

**JCJCR Overseas:** In June 2024, at the annual conference of the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) in Salzburg, Austria, Hana presented the work of JCJCR, together with Ophir Yarden and Vivian Rabia. They shared their personal experiences and professional insights on the current state of interreligious peacebuilding in the Holy Land during the ongoing war, and conducted a workshop using the Spiritual Questionnaire tool from our Healing Hatred methodology.





Hana also spoke at the **Orthodox Christian Studies Center (Fordham University)** conference in September conference: *The Plight of Gaza's Christians: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*; and in November at the **Czech Foreign Ministry Intercultural and Interfaith Conference: Seeking Understanding in Times of Crisis** where she addressed the challenges of interreligious discourse in the reality of the conflict and war.

**Meanwhile, at home, a new Rossing Center JCJCR partnership was formed with the University of Haifa's Laboratory for Religious Studies [HLRS]**, in the framework of which JCJCR staff advised the HLRS on the development of its new "Interfaith Ambassadors Program". Joining Hana in facilitating the students' dialogue sessions is the Rossing Center's **Hussam Elias**, who after nearly 20 years leading our elementary school dialogue programs, now coordinates JCJCR's work in the north of the country.

In his new role, Hussam led a survey project gathering insights and perspectives from local Christians about their identities, their relationship with Israeli society, and their connection to the Church. The study – to be published in the first half of 2025 – is the first comprehensive survey of this population in over 10 years.

[Click to read more.](#)

**JCJCR online:** JCJCR created and launched a new YouTube series (in Hebrew) with a view to educating Jewish Israeli audiences on basic concepts in Christianity, with an emphasis on local holidays and traditions. Also in 2024, JCJCR went into production of a video showcasing the center's unique efforts towards bettering Jewish-Christian relations in the Holy Land. In the video (to be released in 2025), Hana meets with individuals working in the field with diverse perspectives while a professional film crew captures the conversations.





# International Engagement

Given the absence of visiting groups due to the war, we decided to increase our capacity to deliver enriching educational content online. In 2024, the Rossing Center hosted four thought-provoking webinars on a range of topics, including the role of peace education in national healing, interfaith dialogue amidst ongoing violence, the connection between trauma and collective memory, and Arab-Jewish relations in the workplace. These conversations provided an opportunity to connect with international audiences, enriching both our work and theirs.

In conjunction with these inspiring and impactful virtual opportunities, the Rossing Center's international engagement strategy reached audiences overseas face-to-face. In April, the Rossing Center's Executive Director Dr. Sarah Bernstein and

Director of International Engagement John Munayer spent 10 days in New York, Baltimore, and Washington DC, speaking with both Jewish and Christian communities, some of whom invited Muslim guests, altogether meeting more than 400 people from across a wide spectrum of backgrounds and beliefs.

Time and time again, people expressed interest in our Healing Hatred methodology and asked us to bring it to the US and train people there. Upon our return to Jerusalem, we resolved to effectively develop a version of our core dialogue tool, adapted for export. John and Sarah had the opportunity to test this experiment, applying Healing Hatred to different contexts such as the issue of reparations in two workshops while they were in the US.







Another big takeaway from Sarah and John's trip to the US was the interconnectedness of all our communities. What happens in Israel-Palestine affects the lives of people throughout the world. And the ramifications of how our conflict plays out in the US could have far-reaching influence not only on communities across the US but also for us back in Israel-Palestine. Partnership, both local and international, is more important than ever. Israel will not be a safe haven for Jews until Palestinians have peace and security. Palestinians won't have peace and security until Israeli Jews have peace and security. And peace and security for both peoples here will also help reduce interreligious tensions around the world.

Throughout the summer and fall, Sarah continued bringing our work to global audiences. Traveling to Sweden, Germany and Finland, she extended our impact to interfaith dialogue in the international arena. In each place, Sarah was invited to meet with high-ranking representatives and present to large assemblies the

work of the Rossing Center as exemplary of "How to do dialogue and navigate conversations about complex issues between groups and individuals." Based on JCJCR's report mentioned in the previous section, she advised our international partners on the current situation of Christians in the Holy Land. Our trusted partners sought our counsel on all matters related to Israeli-Palestinian peace and the impact of the current hostilities on interreligious peacemaking in their own contexts. We implored them: "If we can do it, even amidst these dreadful circumstances, so can you."

In these meetings, Sarah emphasized the vital need for hope in challenging times, reminding us that, "We can't just hope for a better future; we must take action to make that hope a reality." Sarah consistently acknowledged that the journey to peace may indeed be long, but we at the Rossing Center insist that the situation is never hopeless.







# Team

Throughout 2024, the Rossing Center invested in the mental and emotional wellbeing of its staff. We know that by nurturing the intersection of psychological and physical health, our staff will be better equipped to handle the burdens of peacebuilding work more sustainably day-in and day-out, and model this more effectively to their own participants. We also know that group-bonding is essential for maximizing teamwork, and the diversity of our own staff is not immune to the divisions between national, ethnic, and religious groups currently imbued in the societal norms around us.

Using the tools of "Healing Hatred – Spiritual Counselling in Situations of Conflict," we conducted a retreat for the team, providing a much-needed opportunity to take a step back, delve into our own personal grappling with the situation, and grow as individuals and as a team. It was quite clear afterwards that the emotional processing and shared discussions made us better colleagues, more focused on our partnership and work.

In the second half of the year, we brought in outside experts to equip our team members with the knowledge and skills necessary for coping with intense realities we are currently living through. A trained yoga therapist led a workshop in which she taught us how to identify when we are feeling anxious in our bodies and which exercises and movements to do to dissipate and overcome the anxiety. After more than one year since the deadly beginning of the war, we reflected on the radicalization of public discourse, and its impact on our beneficiaries, particularly Palestinian citizens of Israel. Adv. Samah Darwish, Managing Director of the Racism Crisis Center met with our team, discussing in depth the laws pertaining to freedom of speech. She then reviewed data from the field on what has changed since October 7, 2023, including new legislation currently under review, and suggested ways for individuals to protect themselves from authorities' abuse of the law and their discriminatory policies of enforcement.





**Fethiya Arafat Haddad**

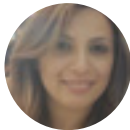


**Ruth Shuster-Eliassi**



**Hila Torten**

**Dialogue**



**Hiba Janadri Abu Khadra**



**Reut Ben-Chorin**

**Education**



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**Dr. Pamela Lubell**

**International  
Engagement**



**Reuven Hanan Adva**



**Ophir Yarden**



**Adi Marer**

**JCJCR**



**Hussam Elias**



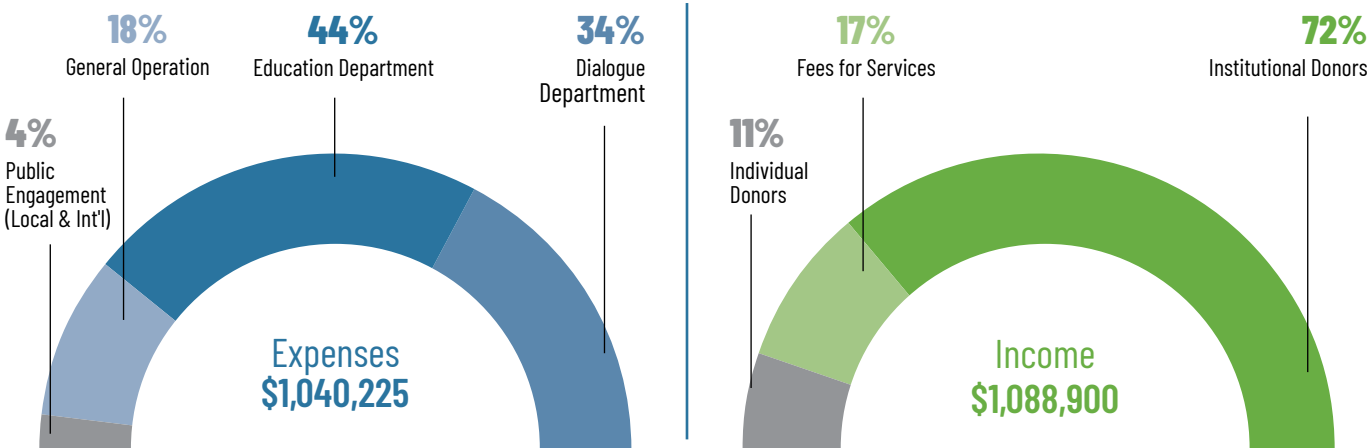
**Hana Bendcowsky**



**Federica Sasso**



# Budget



# Donors

Largest Crowdfunding Campaign to Date:  
**\$110,409**



In 2024, the Rossing Center significantly scaled our crowdfunding capabilities! Leveraging the support we receive from institutional grants, we expanded our reach targeting individual donors. Though not our first such campaign, “Healing Hatred for the Next Generations” was our largest to date. We were truly amazed and deeply moved by the immense support we received from all over the world.

## 374 Donors gave via 39 Ambassadors

Together with generous matching donors, including among others: Sandy and John Dickerson & Amy Gillenson and Jim Fornari.

## Over \$100,000 raised - more than 150% of our original goal!

This campaign was an important opportunity not just to raise the additional funds we need to run our programs specializing in systemic change – it was a chance to get our name out there, show those passionate about shared society how we’ve carefully adapted to the current climate instigated by the war, and make a public cry for hope, empathy, and resilience at a time when so many fall into grief, despair, and fear.

To all those who donated –  
**THANK YOU!**



**We are immensely grateful to all our donors for your partnership and generous support without which our work would not be possible.**

**General:**

Church of Sweden  
Misereor  
Anonymous Foundation

**Project-specific:**

Gimprich Family Foundation  
Dan David Foundation  
Nitzan Foundation  
Kerk in Actie  
Missio Aachen  
FELM  
Kirche in Not  
ELCA  
Kindermissionswerk  
Church of Rhineland  
DVHL  
EMW  
B8 of Hope  
P.E.F. Israel Endowment Funds, Inc.  
Finn Church Aid  
Church of Westphalia  
Church of Rottenburg-Stuttgart

# Calls to Action



## DONATE NOW

support interreligious peacebuilding



## SHARE

raise awareness and spread the word  
about our activities



## STAY INFORMED

through our webinars and other resources  
on our website and social media



## GET INVOLVED

in our international community and  
volunteer to help us amplify our impact







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Donate



  
**ROSSING CENTER**  
FOR EDUCATION AND DIALOGUE

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לחינוך ולדיאלוג