



Press release

Melbourne, Australia

20 February 2020

Israel for Youth Foundation established to address Jewish continuity

The launch of the Israel for Youth Foundation Inc (Israel for Youth) has been welcomed by many Jewish families around Australia. Israel for Youth has been established to provide a financial subsidy for Year 10 students participating in approved Israel programs, and ensure those students return and become active members of the Jewish community.

The first program being supported by Israel for Youth is the United Jewish Education Board's (UJEB) Year 10 Israel Trip. This near six-week educational Israel experience for students in the non-Jewish school system, also requires students to commit to participating in a year-long formal program of community involvement, lectures and social experiences to strengthen their community bonds.

Rising out of findings from the Gen08 survey, Youth 2 Israel (Y2i) was established in Sydney in 2014 to serve the Jewish communities in New South Wales, the ACT and Queensland. More recently, the Gen17 Survey specifically identified the need for a similar organisation in Melbourne, and so Israel for Youth was established to support the Jewish communities not covered by Y2i.

Commenting on the establishment of Israel for Youth, Co-founder and President, Ronn Bechler, said:

"International research shows that providing a 16-year old student with an Israel experience has a profound impact on shaping, building and ensuring a strong Jewish identity for them and our future community. This experience has been shown time and again to be critical in addressing the issue of Jewish continuity in our communities.

"I encourage Jewish communities in Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, Northern Territory and Western Australia to spread the word to sign their students up for this trip of a lifetime. We want all Jewish Australian students to be able to access the same educational experiences as their peers in Jewish day schools, as well as meeting other Jewish students from around the country.

"Having only just been recently established, I am very excited to see the pace of registrations for an Israel for Youth voucher increasing, and importantly we already have students from Melbourne, Darwin and Adelaide registered for an Israel for Youth voucher for this year's UJEB Year 10 Israel Trip.

"If supporting a 16-year old gives the Jewish community an active member for another 70 years, then that's a great outcome."

Israel for Youth is supported by a Board comprising parents that are passionate about the future of Australia's Jewish community. Combining education, community, Israel and Australia were key essentials for their involvement. Having attended Jewish and non-Jewish schools, the Board have been involved in various community organisations, driven by their desire to address Jewish continuity.

The Foundation is being formally launched in Melbourne on 19 March 2020 by David Southwick, MP.

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About Israel for Youth Foundation Inc.

Israel for Youth was established to foster the personal growth of Jewish youth in Australia by providing financial subsidies towards the cost of educational Israel programs. If you would like to find out more, please visit www.israelforyouthfoundation.org.au