



# PREPARING TO DEEPEN ACTION:

A Funder Collaborative  
Finds its Way

JUNE 2017



**JEWISH TEEN**  
Education & Engagement  
FUNDER COLLABORATIVE

**Rosov**  
CONSULTING

Information  
Insight  
Impact

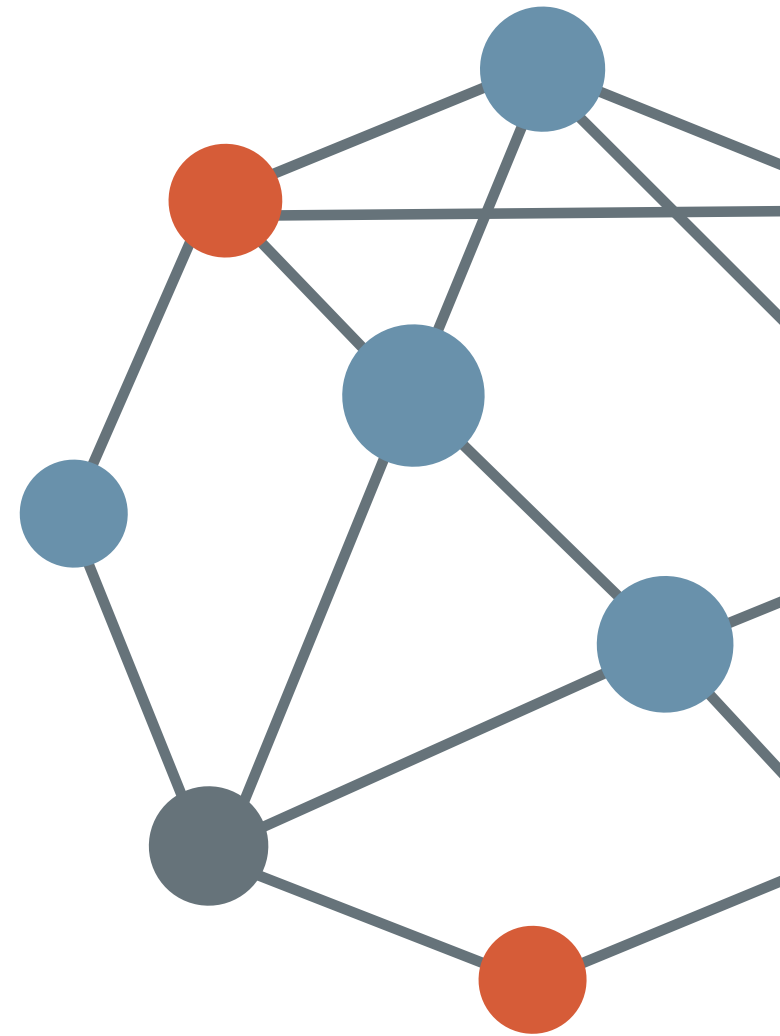
# INTRODUCTION

The formation of the Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Funder Collaborative was the result of a process begun by the Jim Joseph Foundation in 2013. At that time, in an effort to spawn innovative, locally sustainable teen engagement programs, the Jim Joseph Foundation brought together an array of funders to explore various approaches. The first 24 months of this deliberate process in which ten local and five national funders undertook to educate themselves, build relationships and co-invest in community-based Jewish teen education and engagement initiatives was thoughtfully documented in a case study issued in January 2015 by Informing Change, entitled, *Finding New Paths for Teen Engagement and Learning: A Funder Collaborative Leads the Way*.

The first case study highlighted several important achievements of the collaborative in its early years:

- Strong leadership from the convening funder which enabled old and new colleagues to engage in open discussions about possible collaborations;
- Early commitment of significant financial resources;
- Provision of operational and substantive support by an array of consultants;
- Development of mutual expectations and articulating shared measures of success.

This case study<sup>1</sup> documents the next stage of the Funder Collaborative's development, roughly the 21-month period from January 2015 through October 2016 and reflects the Collaborative's commitment to share its process with others who may choose to embark on their own co-funding endeavor.



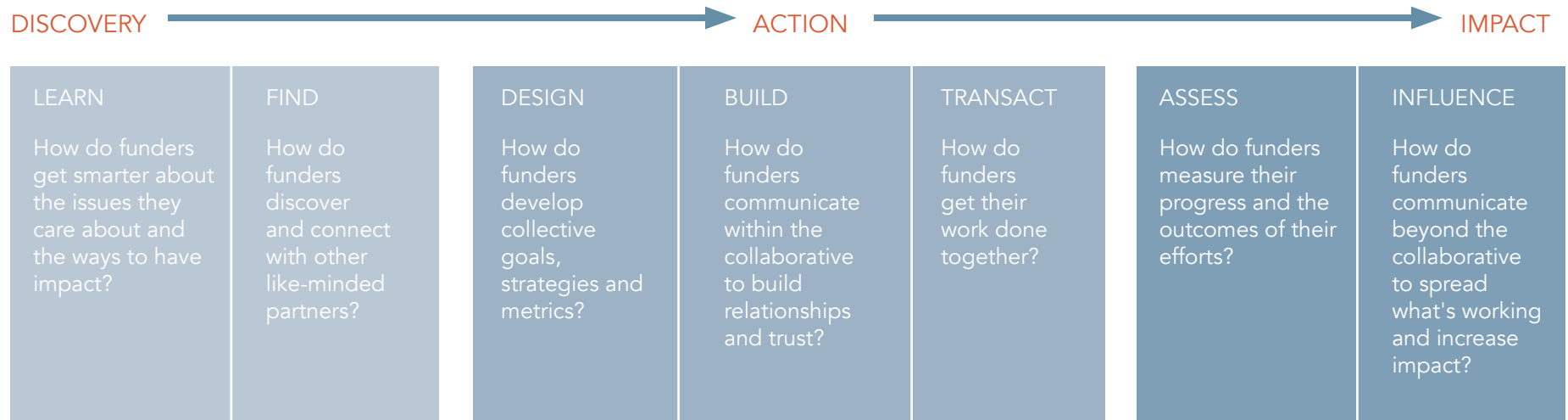
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<sup>1</sup> In 2015, Rosov Consulting was retained as the Cross Community Evaluator. Documentation of the Collaborative's evolution is one important dimension of the CCE's work. Documentation includes: funder Collaborative calls and convenings as well as interviews of all members of the Funder Collaborative (15), local implementers (3) and consultants (5) associated with the Collaborative to reflect on the various emergent themes and activities. The results of this documentation, including a review of Olive Grove's twice annual reports, and all communication on a shared web-based platform, have been synthesized into this case study.

## PHASES OF A COLLABORATIVE'S WORK

The first case study showed how the Collaborative successfully moved from the Discovery phase to the Action phase as depicted in this graphic by the Foundation Center and the Monitor Institute—two thought leaders in the world of Philanthropic collaboration. This case study will explore the Collaborative's experience as it deepens its work in the realm of Action and slowly considers how to move toward Impact.

### Collaborative Needs<sup>2</sup>

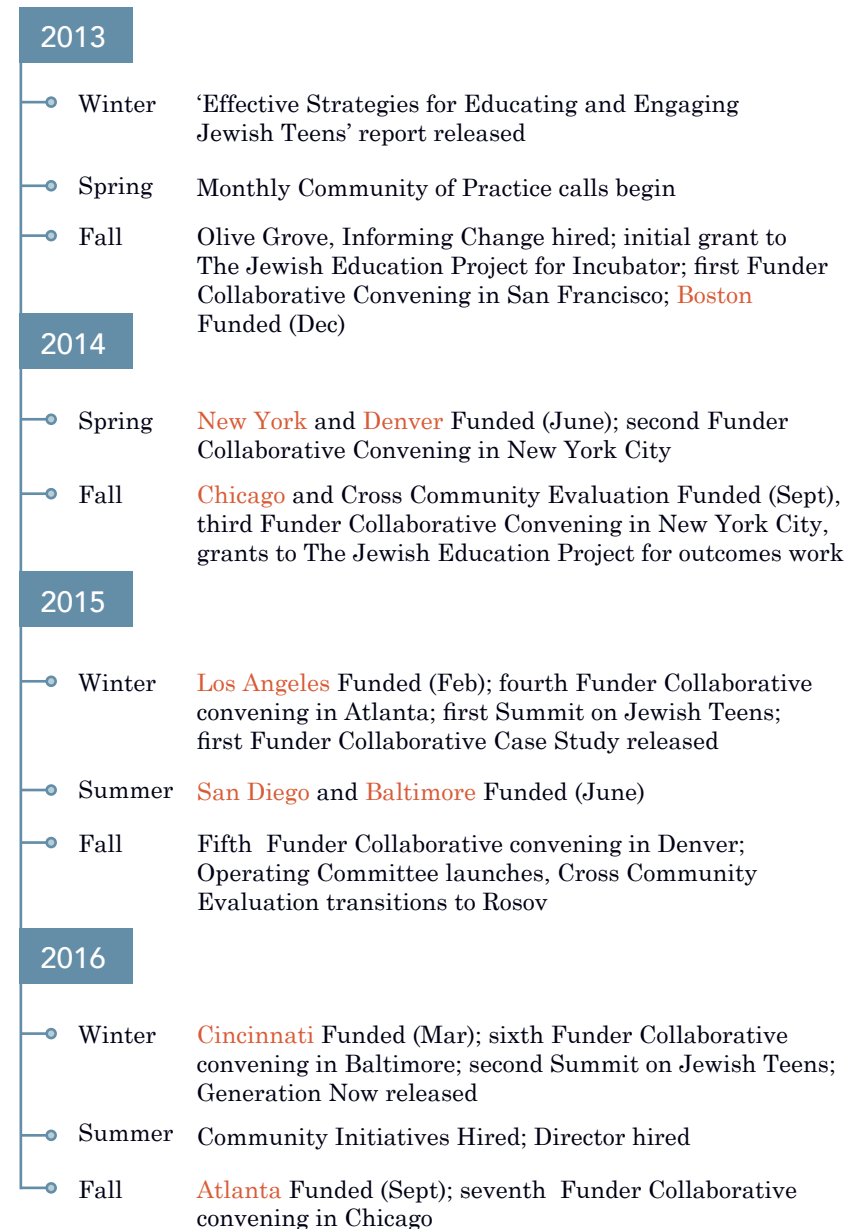


<sup>2</sup>Harnessing Collaborative Technologies: Helping Funders Work Together Better", Key Findings Report, Monitor Institute and the Foundation Center, 2013.

The most recent two years have been marked by a significant amount of activity on multiple fronts.

- By the start of 2015, four (4) of the ten communities had approved grant agreements with the Jim Joseph Foundation, enabling them to begin to staff and implement their initiatives as well as hire a local evaluator. Over the following two years, five (5) more communities were approved for matching funds.
- Local evaluation work documenting early outcomes resulted in reports delivered to each community’s local funders and subsequently shared more broadly with members of the Collaborative.
- The Cross-Community Evaluation team, evaluation consultants supporting the collaborative, worked with each local community to establish baseline measures for evaluation and experimented with a first round of aggregate data analysis for consideration by the Collaborative.
- Finally, a series of critical decisions were made to strengthen the infrastructure of the Collaborative including the engagement of a fiscal sponsor, hiring a full-time director, and putting a few committees into place to support its work: an operating committee and an evaluation advisory committee.

As the Collaborative has evolved and matured it has navigated some important inflection points, learned lessons along the way and developed greater awareness of the issues it will need to tackle moving forward. Our case study will now explore these as it relates to establishing governance and infrastructure, attending to the growing constellation of stakeholders in the Collaborative’s universe, defining and learning about its shared measures of success and aligning around how to collectively build a field.





# GOVERNANCE OF THE COLLABORATIVE: REMOVING THE SCAFFOLD AND BUILDING A STABLE STRUCTURE

The early work of the Collaborative happened during monthly calls and semi-annual multi-day meetings organized and supported by the Collaborative's consultancy with Emily Hall of Olive Grove Consulting. By early 2015 it became apparent that the shared agenda of the Collaborative was straining the time and capacity of all involved.

In response, Emily Hall, the Collaborative's facilitator, interviewed each of the members and crafted a series of deliberate conversations resulting in the establishment of three interrelated structures to support the FC's governance: An Operating Committee, Fiscal Sponsorship, and a Director. Although it took over a year for these structures to be put into place, the overall direction of this change was defined early. The Collaborative took care to work through, in advance, the levels of authority and decision making powers to be vested in each body, as well as appropriate checks and balances. As a result, these transitions were remarkably smooth and unanimously approved by Collaborative members.

*“Coordination takes time, and none of the participating organizations has any to spare. The expectation that collaboration can occur without a supporting infrastructure is one of the most frequent reasons why it fails.”<sup>3</sup>*

*“The Jim Joseph Foundation has been magnanimous in quietly taking on the burden especially in the early years instead of moving too fast to make the Funder Collaborative take them on. They provided a safety net.”*

– Local Funder

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<sup>3</sup> Kania, J. and Kramer, M. 2011. Collective Impact. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Retrieved from: [http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective\\_impact](http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact)



## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES FOR A FUNDER COLLABORATIVE<sup>4</sup>

- I Informal collaboration, in which Funder Collaborative members meet only a few times a year. Hosting and facilitation duties are rotated between FC members, and very little work takes place in between meeting sessions.
- II Informal collaboration, but with more consistent working groups and activities between group meetings. Working groups may explore ideas or advance recommendations in between meetings, but have no formal authority to act on the collaborative's behalf. Additionally, a facilitator may be hired to run and document group meetings. At this level, the Funder Collaborative may have a chair from among its members, which might rotate on a six-month basis. Funding and expenses are either run through one designated Collaborative member, or are divided among members separately.
- III Fiscal sponsorship from one group member or a third party, and frequent contracting to support the group's work. This level presumes a larger number of high-expense and income items, necessitating greater formal structure. Most decisions are still made by the group as a whole.
- IV One partner serves as "backbone" organization, managing fiscal sponsorship and infrastructure, and providing some level of dedicated staffing. One member of the Collaborative may serve as fiscal sponsor, but a staff person would be hired by the full group to serve as a central administrator. Some level of paid staff is present (anywhere from 1 to 15 staffers), and an operating and governance committee is formed from among group members for more efficient decision-making and supervision. This level was deemed most appropriate for collaboratives intending to have a significant level of activity over a period of at least two years.
- V Formation of a permanent 501(c)3/501(c)4/501(c)6 nonprofit. This generally applies to collaborations seeking to continue in perpetuity, and would involve a formal structure of voting and nonvoting members.

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from report shared by Emily Hall, Olive Grove Consulting

## OPERATING COMMITTEE

The Operating Committee is a three-person team chosen from among the members with rotating chairs and staggered term-limits; the Jim Joseph Foundation has a permanent seat at the table as primary investor. The committee meets monthly to explore the contours of an issue in advance of a full Collaborative discussion, reach out to individual members to understand their needs and interests, and to bring carefully considered options to the full membership for a decision. *The fact that this committee is vested with decision-making authority is viewed as critical to its value.* Collaborative members feel that they are now being brought into key decisions at the right time and in the right way.

*“The decision to delegate to the operating committee was critical; having a sub-group that was vested with decision-making authority whom we all clearly trust...that was the first step in the next phase of our governance.”*

*– Local Funder*

In the sequence of interrelated governance structures, the Operating Committee was put into place first and its members steered the Collaborative through the subsequent decision-making process to hire a Fiscal Sponsor and a Director.

## FISCAL SPONSOR

Even with a functional operating committee, the Jim Joseph Foundation is neither an operating nor a hybrid operating/grantmaking foundation, and could not continue to carry the lion's share of the operational responsibilities for the Collaborative. At the same time, none of the other funding partners was prepared to take its place.

As Collaborative members considered their options, it was not immediately clear which alternative would best serve their needs. What expertise did they most need? Did they need an organizational partner with an understanding of the Jewish philanthropic arena? Was it important to work with an organization already familiar with the challenges and opportunities of teen engagement? Perhaps it was most important to find an organization with a successful track record in managing a funder collaborative. Ultimately, the Collaborative voted for this last option and initiated a contract with Community Initiatives, a California based firm working in the multi-sector partnership world for over two decades and offering a range of services, including fiscal sponsorship, grant management, strategic planning, and consultation on media and marketing, and, importantly, with experience supporting other funder collaboratives. Community Initiatives would manage the shared funds of the Collaborative, be the legal owner of the Collaborative's contracts, and offer other concierge services as needed.

## DIRECTOR

For many in the Collaborative, Emily Hall's were the safe hands that helped form them into a collective. And yet, it was becoming clear that full-time support was needed for the growing needs of the group and Olive Grove Consulting was not available for that level of engagement. Therefore, the final piece of the structural puzzle was the hiring of a professional who would oversee the execution of the Collaborative's agenda.

### **What qualifications did the ideal director need to have?**

- Expertise in the field of teen engagement
- A strong background in communal planning and organizational development
- An understanding of the Jewish organizational landscape
- Experience with multi-stakeholder initiatives
- Familiarity with the language and practice of evaluation

### **What qualities did the ideal director need to possess?**

- Vision-driven leadership to take the collaborative into a bold future
- Good listening and facilitation skills; a humble servant
- An individual with "gravitas"
- Adaptable to new situations, as well as a self-starter able to work independently.

Importantly, all agreed that the incoming director should also be someone who exuded warmth and a healthy sense of humor. This was viewed as a critical dimension to ensuring that the members would want to spend time with the director and continue to feel part of a trusted community in which challenges could be shared. In the winter of 2016, in parallel with the process to identify a fiscal sponsor, a search committee comprised of Collaborative members worked with Emily Hall to craft a job description, narrow the pool to three finalists and prepare a recommendation. Eight months later, Sara Allen, the incoming director, officially accepted the job. Community Initiatives was in place in its role as fiscal sponsor and was able to take over the responsibilities for contracting and onboarding. The infrastructure was beginning to work.

## Lessons Learned about Infrastructure Building

- 1 Expect structures to change to meet the evolving needs of the collaborative;
- 2 Clarify roles and levels of authority in advance to pave the way for smooth transitions;
- 3 Attend to how a collaborative will make collective decisions early on;
- 4 Build in time for feedback loops and regular, confidential reflective conversations so that all voices in the system can be heard and inform effective decisions;
- 5 There is a limit to the time and attention that a high-level group of funders with full time positions can give to any one aspect of the work. Thus, when governance and structural issues take center stage, other more substantive agenda items will wait in the wings;
- 6 Take time for relationship building and establishing cultural norms to build trust and eliminate grandstanding, competition and other obstructionist behaviors.

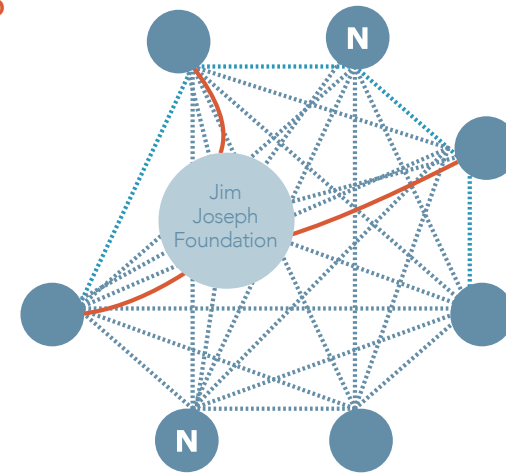


# THE CONSTELLATION OF THE FUNDER COLLABORATIVE: EVOLUTION AND GROWTH

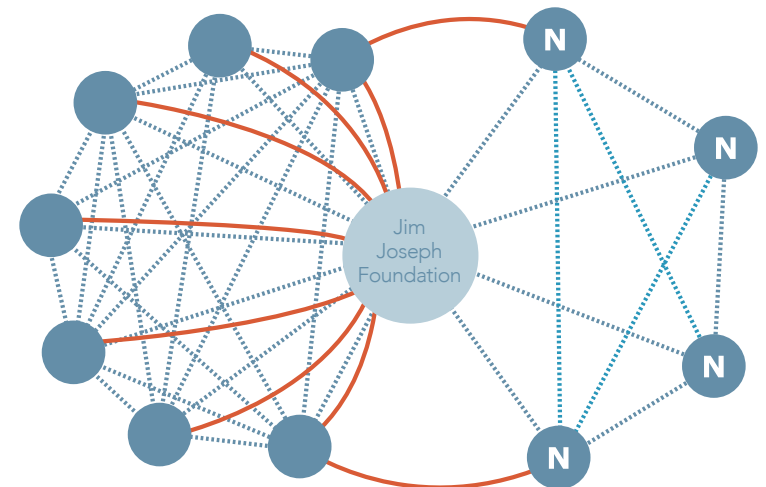
The funding organizations which comprise the Collaborative has held steady since its inception even as the professionals representing each funder has shifted over time. Inevitably, the longest-standing members feel a kinship with one another and, by virtue of their tenure, have also been responsible for maintaining the culture of the Collaborative, a culture characterized by a seriousness of purpose, a high level of discourse, and a willingness to be transparent, to name a few key features. There are at least three types of members who comprise the Collaborative: **the Jim Joseph Foundation** an anchor funder and primary convener; **the national funders** who, together with the Jim Joseph Foundation, have co-funded research on the development of learning outcomes for teens and the tools to measure them; and **the local funders** who, together with Jim Joseph Foundation, are co-investing in community-based teen initiatives.





The 2015 case study indicated that the Jim Joseph Foundation would move out of a central organizing position over time. While the Jim Joseph Foundation is no longer central to the operations, it continues to serve as a link to what is becoming two groups within the collaborative. The foci of the two groups are diverging which will have implications for the Collaborative’s agenda moving forward, as we now explain.

2015



2017



-  Local-level Collaborative members
-  National-level Collaborative members
-  Member-to-member relationships
-  Funder-to-grantee relationships

# COLLABORATIVE MEMBERS

## The Jim Joseph Foundation

From the start, the Jim Joseph Foundation infused the Collaborative's work with a sustained focus on teens and an ethos of data-informed learning, collaboration, transparency, and inclusion. Because of the Foundation's long-standing commitment to this way of working and because they are also co-funders of the community initiatives, they remain firmly at the center of the Collaborative's new structure. By necessity the Jim Joseph Foundation has a significant investment in the success of the enterprise. Ever aware of its large footprint, the Foundation treads carefully so that oversight and support of its financial interests are balanced by ensuring that members continue to feel a shared responsibility for the work of the Collaborative.

## The Local Funders

The largest constituency in terms of sheer numbers, the local funders exert gravitational pull. As their initiatives unfold, their attention is largely taken up with practical matters of launching and guiding their large scale and multi-faceted community-based initiatives. They are stretched to give time both to their local initiative's needs and to the collective agenda of the Collaborative. Now that many governance structures are in place, local funders are eager for more of the Collaborative's time to be devoted to peer assistance on substantive issues related to implementing their initiatives. Recently, semi-annual meeting agendas have begun to respond to local funder needs; this has heightened the gap between the needs and interests of local and national funders.

## The National Funders

The role of the national funders is evolving as they consider how best to contribute during the next phase of the Collaborative's work. As a group, their primary contribution came at the start of the process when they co-funded research related to development of shared outcomes for Jewish teen growth and learning. While national funders continue to sit at the Funder Collaborative table, they are not voting members nor are they implementing local initiatives. Thus, when the focus of the Collaborative shifted to infrastructure building and the details of implementing local initiatives, the national funders focused on the support for a Summit on Jewish Teens and, as of the writing of this case study, are also planning for additional field-wide research to build on the shared outcomes.

## Hybrid Funders

In some cases, the national-local divide is not as stark as it may seem. Three of the five national funders also co-invest in local initiatives in the cities in which they are based. These "hybrid" funders have stronger relationships with at least one local funder; they have more regularized communication around the grant and the initiative and try to be more aligned with respect to needs of the initiative that are communicated at the Collaborative level. And yet, in most respects, these hybrid funders primarily identify with the other national funders. They are not directly implementing their local initiatives and therefore granular discussions about local initiatives are of less interest.

# ADDITIONAL CONSULTANTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

As local communities build out their initiatives, an important new stakeholder group has come into view:

- In Funder Collaborative parlance, the **implementers** constitute the ground level staff directing the teen initiatives in each community, turning proposals on paper into actionable programs. Depending on the community, the implementer's role involves hiring staff, creating workflows, and engaging local stakeholders. The Collaborative has taken an active role in bringing implementers together when it convenes, and it is feeling its way toward how and in what ways to integrate and support this diverse group who are critical to local initiatives' success. The Collaborative's director has now begun to meet with this group to better assess and address their needs.

Additionally, as the work of the Collaborative has evolved, the constellation of supporting consultants has also shifted positions in accordance with shifting needs and priorities.

- The **Cross-Community Evaluators (CCE)** were hired as a team of consultants to study the process and outcomes of community-based Jewish teen education and engagement initiatives in the ten communities overall. The original team proved not to be a good fit for the Collaborative's culture of consensus-based decision-making. In April 2015, the Jim Joseph Foundation initiated an important pivot by terminating the CCE contract and inviting Rosov Consulting, a sub-contractor with the original CCE team, to lead the work.

- As part of its grant proposal to the Jim Joseph Foundation, each community funder has provided for a local evaluation process. The **local evaluators** have become critical partners to the local funders as they support learning about the effectiveness of the implementation strategies and as they attend to outcomes achieved. The local evaluators have been included in Collaborative convenings and are beginning to come together, under the auspices of the CCE, to share successes and challenges related to evaluating various dimensions of these initiatives.

Finally, two other consultants served the Collaborative and have moved on:

- As we have explained, the **Collaborative's Facilitator**, Emily Hall of Olive Grove consulting has ceded her role to the combined work of the Director and the Fiscal Sponsor.
- The **National Incubator**, a consultancy with the Jewish Education Project, was originally undertaken to facilitate the launch of local funders' community planning processes and to serve as the Collaborative's resident content expert with respect to teen education and engagement in the Jewish world. Over time, as the Collaborative's focus shifted to infrastructure building, attention was diverted from these content-related matters. The National Incubator's contract ended in 2016; with a director now on board, the Collaborative is still determining what additional content expertise will be needed.

2015



2017



*"It is wonderful for our on-the-ground program people to come to convenings and have their minds' expanded and connections made and see this as a national endeavor. It is great for them to understand this is not business as usual."*

*- Local Funder*

# BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

There are several benefits that keep funders at the table despite the complexity of their task:

## The Learning Agenda

In interviews, many members spoke longingly of the early days of the Collaborative when their shared learning took precedence over organizational infrastructure. They are hungry for the learning agenda to dominate the work of the Collaborative again now that many of the infrastructure decisions have been made.

## Accountability Partners

Each month, local funders report to each other on their progress and challenges related to various aspects of their initiative.

## Creating a National Context for the Work

All funders are appreciative of the structure which keeps them zoomed out at the national level or zoomed in to the local ground conditions.

## The Prospect of Game-Changing Discoveries

For some, the Collaborative holds out the promise for reframing the way the Jewish community thinks about what it is trying to achieve for Jewish teens.

*“They model the best of Jewish values. They love to explore and challenge and have never devolved into unconstructive conflict. They have created ground rules and honored them around sharing space, listening, and advocating.”*

*– Consultant to Funder Collaborative*

*“We have to prioritize how to learn together. Rightfully we do a lot of reporting out but we don’t do enough learning”*

*– National Funder*

*“The regularity of our interaction with each other and the Jim Joseph Foundation has kept us disciplined and focused.”*

*– Local Funder*

*“Having everyone at the table gives us a better picture of the national landscape and helps us to keep our lay leadership and professionals better informed.”*

*– Local Funder*

It is not unusual to read about political jockeying, turf wars, and power plays in funder collaborative efforts such as this. What is notable in this collaborative is the astonishing absence of these behaviors. Members are inspired by their peers, and deeply fulfilled by the trusting relationships they have developed. They feel known on a national playing field and are motivated and humbled to do this work among an august group.



## LOCAL TEEN INITIATIVES GET UNDERWAY: THE VALUE OF “LINKED EXPERIMENTS”

As can be seen in the Funder Collaborative timeline, local initiatives were launched over time as each community was ready and ultimately awarded a grant by the Jim Joseph Foundation. Although initiatives differ in both structure and approach, the local funders share several critical challenges and draw on each other’s experience and wisdom in a variety of areas:

- **Defining the role of staff** who would lead these initiatives (the implementers)
- **Sourcing new staff;**
- **Developing systems** such as websites and databases;
- **Working with national providers** of teen programs who may play a role in local program provision.

Other benefits related to participation in the larger Collaborative are apparent. Put simply- collaboration is begetting collaboration.

- Being part of an ambitious cross-community initiative (i.e. the Collaborative) enhances local funders’ standing in their own communities and opens the door to new partnerships
- The Collaborative’s own formation process has modeled approaches that are critical to local success: involving a diverse group of stakeholders, aligning around shared outcomes, embedding an evaluation process, developing robust relationships, etc.
- Local initiative’s are distinguished by the robust array of sometimes unprecedented partners on the ground collaborating on behalf of teens.
- This disposition to network and collaborate is also rippling out to implementers and local evaluators who meet with and learn from one another.

There is some evidence that an even deeper level of collaboration may be emerging. For example, the three California community funders are joining together to convene a Summit on Teen Wellness and several communities are formalizing an approach to linking teens in their own communities to opportunities in other parts of the country. Building on these successful collaborations locally is a priority for the Collaborative moving forward.

*“Being part of something bigger than our community, to have the national support, intelligence and research and show that we are trying to change the conversation has helped me to justify and validate what we are doing.”*

– Local Funder

*“Kudos to the Jim Joseph Foundation for recognizing that 10 independent experiments could never be as successful as 10 linked experiments. That is very wise.”*

– Local Funder

## FIELD BUILDING: THE COLLABORATIVE COUNTS THE WAYS

The question of how the Funder Collaborative is working to build the field of Jewish teen education and engagement more broadly has been a repeating trope among the Collaborative members over the past two years. The question goes to the heart of what is ‘collaborative’ about the Funder Collaborative and there are at least two competing, though potentially complementary, views that take expression among the members.

One view is that by virtue of the work being undertaken in each of the ten communities the Collaborative is already actively building the field. New programs are being incubated, existing program providers are being incentivized to expand or deepen their work, youth professionals are being offered serious professional development — many of whom will move from one community to another thereby spreading good practice wherever they go — and all are being asked to take evaluation seriously. Furthermore, conversations are underway among the national funders to consider building up the organizational capacity of existing national youth organizations whose local affiliates are supporting initiatives in the ten communities. As the cross-community evaluation work continues, the Collaborative will be able to share its learning with others and, in that way too, open new pathways for funders to bring successful strategies to scale.

**In this view, the Collaborative’s work is to improve existing systems by driving deep change in local communities to catalyze broader impact.**

A different perspective is that the Collaborative needs to leverage pooled funds, as well as the increased investment of the national funders, to take collective action on one or more strategies that can dramatically impact teen engagement everywhere — not only in the ten communities. The assumption is that a body like the Funder Collaborative has considerable authority to bring relevant players into a discussion of critical systemic issues like supporting the pipeline of well-trained youth professionals, establishing field-wide data collection efforts or bridging between organizations who serve teens and college students.

**In this view, the task of the Collaborative is to transform the business of teen education and engagement by disrupting systems and nurturing where-to-fore unimagined approaches.**

This is very much an ongoing conversation within the Collaborative.

# EVALUATION:

## LEARNING HOW TO LEARN ACROSS COMMUNITIES

As documented in the first case study, the ability of the Collaborative to evaluate its own effectiveness was a critical component of the early conversations that formed the entity. The potential to aggregate data across multiple settings is seen by the Collaborative as a valuable way to inform future funding decisions in the teen space.

The five shared Measures of Success originally arrived at when the Funder Collaborative was founded was leading-edge and unifying for the Collaborative in its early years, though they might more aptly have been called “shared aspirations.” Shaping these aspirations into measurable indicators has been a significant component of the Cross-Community Evaluation team’s focus (CCE), working in conjunction with the Collaborative’s Evaluation Advisory Group and local funders. The development of common instrumentation for evaluation is a critical building block to enable cross-community comparisons, knitting together the diverse initiatives across the country. The first such shared instrument, has been the development of a validated scaled instrument to assess Teen Jewish Learning and Engagement. Not only is this instrument being applied in local initiatives but increasingly national Jewish teen organizations across the country are expressing interest in how it could serve their own program and evaluation needs.

Local evaluators are also collaborating with the CCE to develop shared instrumentation for use with parents and youth professionals.

*“Holding ourselves accountable to measuring our success doesn’t normally happen in the Jewish world. We are leading by saying we are going to measure our success.”*

*– Jim Joseph Foundation Professional*

*“The problem is that we developed these [Measures of Success] without evaluators. There may be things we can’t compare or measure.”*

*– National Funder*

## CHALLENGES OF CROSS COMMUNITY EVALUATION

- **Defining meaningful measures is not only a technical task.** The CCE team has been facilitating conversations in each local community to think deeply about meaningful measures of concepts such as diversity, engagement, and sustainability. These conversations will ultimately help the Collaborative to compare outcomes across the ten communities. They have also served to spark important thinking about the ongoing development of the local initiatives themselves: informing theories of change and programmatic decision making.
- **There is an inherent tension between aspirations which inspire experimentation and measures employed for accountability.** While local funders would like to take a more experimental stance toward their work and surface promising new models for teen engagement, they are also keenly aware of the need to show results given the scale of the investment.
- **Data about progress on shared measures of success across communities, are by necessity broad and ‘meta’.** The nuance and depth of understanding about the links between interventions and outcomes are more readily available at the local level. Members are eager to place their communities in a national context and understand how their strategies for teen engagement are stacking up against their peers. At the same time, the learning needs of the local communities are often more granular and particular; local evaluators are struggling to meet both the local learning needs of the community funders and the cross-community needs of the CCE. In response, the CCE has begun to actively convene local evaluators, creating a forum for communication about shared successes and challenges and working to align cross-communal learning needs with local ones.

Ultimately, as the local initiatives generate more robust findings (to date the aggregate numbers are too small for complex analysis), the CCE hopes to help the Funder Collaborative better understand which strategies are generating the highest yield and ultimately tell a meaningful story about its achievements.

*“Seeing what is happening on a national basis will give us real information about what is happening with teens and we can drill deeper in the community.”*

– Local Funder

*“If we can make the evaluation component useful, that might change the landscape in terms of the value placed on data gathering and what can be learned from that effort.”*

– National Funder

# LOOKING AHEAD

The Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Funder Collaborative is in its infancy by most standards. The literature on funder collaboratives would have us measure the arc of its progress in decades not years. Nevertheless, it has taken critical steps that build on lessons learned from other initiatives: investing in governance structures that foster efficient and agile decision making, continuing to build trusting relationships not only among the primary Collaborative members but among its growing constellation of stakeholders, and keeping the evaluation and learning agenda of the Collaborative front and center even as it navigates complicated terrain.

**Some interesting questions are on the horizon given its accomplishments to date:**

What will the constellation of national and local funding partners of the collaborative look like in two years' time? Will Jim Joseph Foundation continue to be the most visible national funding anchor of the Collaborative? Will the current national funders clearly differentiate their role within the Collaborative?

Will the current governance structures prove to be adequate to the evolving needs of the Collaborative? How will the services of the fiscal sponsor be leveraged? Will there be a need for new committees of the collaborative to manage new priorities? Will members sustain the interest and commitment required to support their own governance? Will decision making processes hold up to increasing complexity?

How will the growing ecosystem around the collaborative evolve? Will implementers drive new and promising collaborations built on increased connection to the substance of each other's initiatives? Will new stakeholder groups such as local program providers, lay leaders or national teen serving organizations be more intentionally integrated into the Collaborative's orbit?

In what ways will evaluation data at the local and cross-community level be leveraged for program improvement and sustainability? Will the Collaborative succeed in defining cross-cutting measures that are meaningful at the local level? Will evaluation findings be resonant with and ultimately influence teen program providers outside of the Collaborative's ecosystem?

Collaborative members have reviewed this case study for their own learning and development, and together with the Director are already moving forward to address priority issues. The Collaborative will likely develop in new and unanticipated ways over the next few years as it grapples with the next stage of its evolution. A third case study which will document the next phase in the Collaborative evolution is planned for the Winter of 2018.



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to the many people who have had a role in the formation and evolution of the Funder Collaborative as well as the many people who contributed to the insights reflected in this report:

## **Funder Collaborative Members:**

Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation  
Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston  
The Crown Family  
Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco,  
The Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties  
Jewish Federation of San Diego County  
Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago  
Jim Joseph Foundation

Lippman Kanfer Foundation for Living Torah  
Rose Community Foundation  
The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore  
The Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta  
The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles  
The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati  
The Marcus Foundation  
UJA-Federation of New York

We also thank the following firms and organizations for their work with the Collaborative and the time they took to be interviewed for this case study.

## **Consultants:**

Olive Grove Consulting  
The Jewish Education Project  
Rosov Consulting  
Informing Change  
Plan A

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