



SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Ensuring that every young Jew around the world is able to participate in the life-changing experience of one of our Israel Year Programs

Executive Summary

For more than 80 years, our Hachshara programs (Israel Year Programs) have played a part in shaping and training the future leaders of Bnei Akiva and Jewish communities around the world. This gap year that we offer is an ideal opportunity for devoting significant time to Jewish learning at the same time as being immersed in experiencing life in Israel.

Alongside the studies in Torah and learning about Israel through travel, there are also volunteer components of the program which includes options such as Kibbutz work, Magen David Adom, training in Zahal, leadership development and an educational trip to Poland.

World Bnei Akiva is considered the foremost expert on informal Jewish Zionist education, and has been for many decades, providing the Diaspora and Israel with strong and devoted individuals in leading positions for generations, and the thrust of this work is done during our Israel Year Programs.

Our Hachshara Programs shape the identity of a large number of Jewish youth around the world. We have proven, again and again, throughout multiple generations, that this is a time when the majority of our participants make life decisions on where they will live, who they will marry and what type of Jewish life they intend to live.

The actual cost of our Israel Year Programs ranges from \$17,000 to \$25,000 USD, and even with grants of between \$5,000 to \$10,000 USD from the MASA organization, there are still hundreds of potential participants who cannot afford these sums.

Establishing a scholarship fund, or contributing to the fund is a matter of utmost priority. It is a matter of investing in the the continuation Jewish life and identity.

The Want To create a scholarship fund with \$2 million USD in assets within 10 years, which in turn will generate \$80,000/year to be used as scholarships for those in need.

The Need Donors to partner with us in order to secure the success of the project.

The Ask

- * World Bnei Akiva is seeking donations in order to build the fund.
- * Donors of at least \$100,000 will be able to name an annual scholarship in perpetuity.
- * Short term named scholarships can be made as well starting at \$5,000.
- * Read on for more details.

Mission and Background | World Bnei Akiva

Bnei Akiva inspires and empowers young Jews with a sense of commitment to the Jewish people, the Land of Israel and the Torah, and is one of the largest Jewish youth movements in the world. We're an inclusive movement, so while we have a certain religious standard, everyone is welcome. We are active across the globe and reach over 20,000 chanichim, thus wherever you go in the world, you'll find a home with Bnei Akiva.

World Bnei Akiva is the nonprofit organization, with its headquarters in Jerusalem, which formally works with the Jewish communities in the Diaspora, assisting and strengthening the local Bnei Akiva branches, as well as the wider Jewish communities, for our common goals.

Our mission is to educate Jewish youth around the world to understand and live by the movements ideology of Torah v'Avodah by way of an inclusive approach, and to encourage Aliyah by instilling a love for Israel through Zionist education.

Bnei Akiva was established in Eretz Yisrael as the youth wing of the Mizrachi Movement in 1929, and in 1958 the World Secretariat of Bnei Akiva, or as we are know today, World Bnei Akiva, was formed.

As of 2016 we run our operation with a staff of 20 people in Israel, and 34 family and 41 singles shlichim in 23 countries, 43 cities and in 110 snifim (branches). Additionally we administer several gap year Israel programs (Hachsharot programs), an outreaching education department, services for olim chadashim, other camps and programs around the world, and more.

Our Israel Year Programs (Hachshara)

World Bnei Akiva has developed an expertise in providing high quality, relevant and professional educational seminars for the participants who come on our year programs to Israel from all around the globe. The participants on our Israel Year Programs learn new skills, enhance old ones, develop their Jewish identity and adapt to new environments – all while enjoying a group experience which includes meeting peers from all around the world.

We have played a part in shaping the lives of Jewish youth around the world for more than 80 years. Hachshara is a vital component in their Bnei Akiva journey, when they can devote time to learning Jewish texts, develop independently and explore their identity.

Our year programs in Israel are roughly divided into the following sections:

- Opening Seminar
- Jewish Enrichment and Machon Leadership Institute
- Community Volunteering
- Marva Army Experience, or Magen David Adom
- Kibbutz
- Journey to Poland
- Closing Seminar

Jewish Enrichment

Education is at the heart of Bnei Akiva, and there will be learning programmes throughout the year. However, there is also a set period of time dedicated specifically to Jewish learning. Our learning institutions teach a Religious Zionist and Modern Orthodox educational philosophy, and you will also learn about critical and relevant issues of faith in modern times. You'll be guided throughout, and different levels will be catered for. To be a participant on Hachshara, you don't need prior knowledge in Jewish studies – you just need commitment to learn and to grow. We will equip you with Torah learning skills that will stay with you for life, and you'll soon feel at home in a Beit Midrash.

Machon Leadership Institute

The Machon period is an intense and interactive seminar looking at Zionism, Israeli society, Jewish dilemmas, Israeli advocacy and leadership. The Machon is committed to training, inspiring and enriching the Jewish leaders of tomorrow. Providing a broad range of stimulating sessions, combined with exciting seminar days exploring Israeli society, you'll be nurtured into making life-defining decisions. The Machon will develop your understanding of key areas relating to modern activism, Jewish life and the State of Israel.

Community Volunteering

Volunteering combines Bnei Akiva's principles of Torah and Avodah. You'll live and volunteer in a neighborhood in one of Israel's socio-economically deprived areas where there is a real need for volunteers. Living in apartments, and shopping, cleaning and cooking by yourselves, you will learn to be independent and gain important skills that you will use later in life. Volunteer placements may include teaching English in local community centers, helping in soup kitchens, working with the elderly, and sports. Your time will be supplemented with a learning program and evening activities. Through your experience, you will gain appreciation for the challenges facing the people of Israel today.

Kibbutz

From the early days of the State, kibbutzim had a sense of duty, serving as a pillar of strength for Zionism. The members lived under extreme conditions, while tilling the soil, draining the swamplands, and building a settlement. Today, Hachshara participants are viewed as valuable contributors to the kibbutz movement. Working with kibbutz members, you may share duties in the field, gardens, factories, kitchen, dining hall or childcare facilities. You'll be offered placements according to the work requirements of the kibbutz, and you'll live together in kibbutz housing, eating meals in the communal dining room. The group will also become involved in kibbutz social and communal activities such as Shabbat and holiday celebrations. You'll be "adopted" by an Israeli kibbutz family, enabling you to have a closer view of what kibbutz life means for the children and adults who reside there permanently.

Zahal/IDF

The Zahal Marva program is ideal for those who want to become familiar with Israel by experiencing the physical and emotional challenges of the country and its people. Through hiking the land, living in field conditions, navigating deserts and participating in seminars and lectures, you'll learn about the issues of the country. The program is based in the Southern Negev, but you'll spend time in various other parts of the country, including Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and the Galilee. The two-month experience is conducted in easy Hebrew, and as participants come from all over the world, that becomes the common language of communication, allowing for significant improvement of Hebrew skills. Marva is a physically demanding program, and participants are expected to be in good physical condition and highly motivated. You will be required to have a personal interview prior to acceptance.

Magen David Adom

Magen David Adom provides effective emergency first-aid treatment. You'll be part of this mission and gain valuable hands-on experience giving basic medical treatment while experiencing "real life" in Israel. After completing a training course, you'll volunteer alongside Israelis on ambulances at various MDA stations across the country. You'll be a certified "First Responder", recognised throughout MDA Israel. Shalhevet will be assigned stations based on the needs of MDA. Depending on the amount of volunteers, the group may be split into various stations. Participants must be in good physical and mental health, and basic conversational Hebrew is required. The work you will do saves lives and has a lasting effect on Israeli society. It is highly rewarding and is ideal for people who enjoy working with, and helping others.

Journey to Poland

You'll have the special opportunity of visiting Poland as part of your year on Hachshara. Starting and ending in Israel, the trip focuses on the experiences of Polish Jewry throughout its history. You'll explore the immense and beautiful Jewry of pre-war Poland, dating back 800 years, and you'll examine the years of the Holocaust by visiting Jewish ghettos, death and labour camps, and other significant sites. The trip is prepared meticulously by our educational team so that the experience is a meaningful one. Whilst in Israel, you'll prepare for your journey to Poland, and on your return, you'll deal with processing and concluding the many concepts and issues that the trip covered.

The Scholarship Fund

Objective

establish a Scholarship Fund of \$2 million USD by 2026 in order to assist those youngsters who cannot afford to participate on our life-changing Israel Year Programs, which in turn;

- educate, strengthen and empower Jewish youth and around the world, laying the foundations of strong Jewish identities;
- infuse the Jewish communities with a further trained young leadership;
- inspire Jewish youth to consider living their lives in Eretz Yisrael.

Current situation

- Currently we have around 250 participants on our Israel Year Programs each year.
- Currently we have around 80 of those participants receiving extra financial help, in addition to the MASA scholarships which all our participants receive.
- The support these 80 receive is currently taken care of in an ad hoc manner, looking different from country to country and even city to city.
- The average support divided between the 80 is roughly \$2,500/year.
- There is also an unknown number of potential participants around the world who do not even apply for funds because of the cost of the program. We estimate that another 50-100 persons would apply if there was more financial subsidies available.
- Our biggest need is for participants from South America and South Africa, though not excluding participants coming from all countries we work with.

Donating to the Scholarship Fund

General donation

We invite everyone to make donations that are earmarked for the Scholarship Fund which we hope will have at least \$2 million USD in assets by the year 2026.

Named Scholarship in perpetuity

A donation of \$100,000 USD or more will allow you to establish a scholarship fund in a name of your choice as a part of the main Scholarship Fund. The annual interest of the fund you name will be used to support participants participating on our Hachshara programs. The recipient of 'your' scholarship will:

- know the name of the scholarship
- know the background of the person/s whom the scholarship is named after

World Bnei Akiva will:

- recognize the donor on our website, newsletter and on social media
- invite the donor to be part of our close circle of supporters
- recognize the donor with a prominent plaque in Beit Bnei Akiva

A \$100,000 USD donation to the Scholarship Fund can be transferred in smaller installments over a number of years.

Donating a scholarship - short term

We are also in need of short term donations to be used for scholarships immediately (not earmarked for the Scholarship Fund).

Donations of \$5,000 and up can be used for a 'one-off' named scholarship.

Donations of \$10,000 and up will receive a plaque of recognition in Beit Bnei Akiva.



World Bnei Akiva thanks you for your interest in this urgent project and we thank you for your inspiration, time and consideration. We look forward to a fruitful partnership with you, working together on strengthening the Jewish identities of youth around the world, their love for Israel, and keeping us all connected - now and in the future.