

Reconstructing Judaism's Auerbach Innovation Launch Grant 2023–2024

For Innovating Reconstructionist rabbinical students and recent graduates

Reconstructing Judaism is delighted to award one \$18,000, 2:1 matching grant to support innovation that strengthens Jewish community and engages the unengaged and/or under-engaged. We support change makers in the Reconstructionist community to spark emerging expressions of Jewish life in our changing world.

Multiple forces at work in our times demand that we reconstruct opportunities to immerse in Jewish life. This grant will support an innovative endeavor that responds to one or more of the following forces: 1) rising generations that seek connections and yearn for new entry points; 2) technological advances insisting we find ways to harness their power; 3) increasing diversity that cries out for inclusion; and, or 4) social and political upheaval that insists on action.

Your initiative should respond to shifts in the American Jewish landscape and seek to engage and *create community* for the unengaged and/or under-engaged.

One \$18,000, 2:1 Matching Grants

Reconstructing Judaism is offering one \$18,000 Auerbach Innovation Launch Grant. This grant is offered as a 2:1 matching grant. To receive the full \$18,000, the recipient will independently raise or develop income totaling \$9,000. Up to \$1,500 of the \$9,000 can be attributed to in-kind services. If the grantee generates less than the total required, then the grant award will be proportionately reduced.

Applicants are encouraged to work with partners. However, the team leader must be a current RRC student or a recent RRC graduate (graduated 2022 or 2021). Grant recipients will provide two grant reports, mid-year and end of year, including financial accounting.

Grant payments are distributed three times throughout the year.

Award Decisions

A three-judge panel will review all applications and make award decisions. The panel reserves the right not to award the grant if proposals do not adequately meet grant criteria.

Application Timeline

By August 1, 2023, send proposal to Cyd Weissman, Cweissman@reconstructingjudaism.org. Grant awards will be announced via email during the week of August 20, 2023. The project must have an anticipated start date no later than October 2023. The project needs to be completed within one year of the initial financial disbursement.

Grant Criteria:

1. Project tests an innovative approach to Jewish living and engagement in America;
2. Must serve Jews outside of New York City and Los Angeles;
3. Has potential for expansion into a larger-scale project; and
4. Welcomes women, LGBTQ+ and Jews of Color among all other applicants. Project will need to build community around the challenges and opportunities you address.

Be bold. Be willing to fail and to learn. Be prepared to celebrate your successes and build from the misses. Grant funds cannot be used to employ staff from Reconstructing Judaism. You can include salary for yourself as part of the budget. We honor serial entrepreneurs, but the Auerbach Launch Grant will only be awarded once to an individual. Learn the stories of previous [Auerbach Launch Grantees](#).

Questions

Connect with Cyd Weissman, Vice President, Engagement and Innovation,
Reconstructing Judaism Cweissman@reconstructingjudaism.org

Reconstructing Judaism's Auerbach Innovation Launch Grant Application Instructions

Provide a cover page with name and contact information. Please keep your application to 3–4 pages double-spaced, containing the below sections:

Project Overview

1. A 1-sentence summary.
2. What is the problem you are trying to solve? Or what opportunity is presenting itself?
3. Describe your project in greater detail:
 - Who are you serving? How many people do you hope to engage?
 - What have you learned about their needs? How did you uncover this?
 - How does your project address those needs?
 - What makes your project unique?
 - Describe the community-building aspects of your project. How will the project foster connections?

Your Team

1. Who are you? Why does this project matter to you?
2. What experience do you (your team members) have that demonstrates your ability to complete the work outlined in your project?
3. Who else will work with you to make the project happen?

Action Steps

1. Provide a project timeline (time and tasks).
2. Where do you need help?
3. Provide a budget (revenue and expenses).

**With appreciation to the Beatrice Fox Auerbach Foundation Advisory Fund
I/Schiro (SFS), a donor-advised fund at the Jewish Community Fund of Greater
Hartford.**