



Jewish Community
OF GREATER
Foundation METROWEST NJ

FAMILY PHILANTHROPY

DEVELOPING A PHILANTHROPIC MISSION STATEMENT

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DEVELOPING A PHILANTHROPIC MISSION STATEMENT

Part I: Why Write a Philanthropic Mission Statement?

Putting your philanthropic purpose into words can make your giving more meaningful. Why are you giving? What inspires you? What key values motivate you? What do you want to achieve?

Writing down a few sentences that clarify your philanthropic intentions will go a long way.

Focus: Identifying what you care about most will enable you to decide how to focus your resources. With a myriad of issues that need attention and more than 1.5 million nonprofits in the U.S., prioritizing a focus will help you achieve your desired outcome.

Motivation: It feels good to give to what you care about. This will help you stay connected and may lead to more involvement in the cause you care most about. Philanthropy is not just about monetary donations, it is about giving of your time, voice, expertise, and network to a cause.

Impact: Feeling good about a cause will encourage you to stay involved and to set up actionable goals for what you would like to accomplish in the long term. You can put strategies in place to help you stay focused and assess challenges and growth during the implementation of your plan.

Helps you say NO: Saying no to charities in need can be hard! We all get many year-end appeals and requests from family and friends. While you can set aside a small portion of your charitable funds for requests like these, the majority of your charitable funds should be reserved for the causes that really matter to you.

The worksheet on following next pages will guide you through the process of crafting a philanthropic mission statement that will help you focus your giving.

Part II: Writing Your Statement

Step One: What inspires you?

As the first step, we ask you to take a few minutes to reflect on what inspires you. Your values, experience, and Jewish identity are part of what will inform your future giving.

What are some formative experiences in your life, and how did they affect you?

Who are the people who have influenced your life, and what did they teach you?

What are your top three core values?

What inspires or upsets you about our world?

What motivates you to give?

Step Two: Focus Your Philanthropy

Your mission statement will reflect what you want to accomplish through your philanthropy. Focusing on specifics will encourage strategic philanthropic outcomes and keep you connected.

What issues do you want to focus on? Why? How?

What specific places, institutions or groups of people are you interested in supporting?

Pulling from your values answer in step one, what relationship do you see among your values and areas of focus?

Example: "My top three values are community, relationships, and tradition. I am interested in securing a Jewish future and making sure families have access to Jewish programs and experiences. The relationship I see is that in order for there to be a strong Jewish community with respect for Jewish tradition, there need to be Jewish programs for young families, like PJ Library and access to Jewish camp."

What is your long-term philanthropic goal?

Step Three: Write Your Mission Statement

Drawing on the answers you provided above, write a two-three sentence mission statement for your giving.

Sample Mission Statements:

“We believe that the opportunity for securing a Jewish future starts with engaging young families, particularly those who are otherwise not connected with the Jewish community. It is our goal to support local Jewish engagement opportunities and initiatives.”

“To honor my mother’s work as an early childhood educator, I will donate funds and volunteer at early childhood education programs in New Jersey, so all children can thrive in their most formative years.”

“We are interested in encouraging practical and caring solutions to local poverty. We will financially support local food kitchens, pantries, and shelters and make time to volunteer as a family.”