



RENÉ CASSIN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The René Cassin Fellowship Program (RCFP) is a one year educational programme on Judaism and human rights for young professionals (ages 25-35). It has hubs in New York, London and Jerusalem, with 12 Fellows in each hub. Over the course of a year Fellows will gather for monthly study sessions (evenings) that explore human rights through the lens of Jewish values and the Jewish historical experience. The program also involves intensive interaction between the three centres of Jewish life, a 9-day study tour to Israel in June and hands-on internships in institutions working on human rights and social justice issues.

With lead funding from the New York UJA/Federation, the RCFP is designed to reach the increasing numbers of young Jews that are distancing themselves from their relationship with Israel and the organized Jewish community. In many cases, these young Jews find their values more aligned with human rights organizations than they do with the Jewish establishment. The RCFP's deep commitment to human rights as well as to an affirmative identification with the Jewish people and the State of Israel means that it is capable of reaching a constituency that is often beyond the reach of the Jewish community.

RCFP Program Objectives

- 1) To deepen and broaden participants' knowledge, understanding and engagement of Jewish visions of a just society through the study of Jewish classical and modern sources and contemporary international human rights law.
- 2) To wrestle with the dilemmas and value-conflicts raised by the interplay of international human rights law, Jewish tradition and the contemporary social and political reality of the Jewish People and the State of Israel. This will be achieved through the examination of examples from Israel, diaspora Jewish communities and other societies.
- 3) To strengthen the social capital of the Jewish people by engaging socially/politically active young Jews (ages 25-35) from three continents in a program of study, cross-cultural dialogue, travel, and internships.
- 4) To galvanize a movement of young Jewish social activists who will be equipped with the skills and passion to promote social justice and human rights locally and globally.

Sponsoring Organizations and Professional Staff

René Cassin is a London-based non-profit organization, founded in 2000, that uses the historical Jewish experience and positive Jewish values to campaign and educate on universal human rights issues such as discrimination, asylum and genocide. The organization is named in honour of René Cassin, a French Jew and Nobel Laureate, who was one of the principal co-drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights along with Eleanor Roosevelt. The organization's executive Director is Shauna Leven, an attorney with expertise in the area of human rights. Shauna will serve as faculty for the RCFP London hub.

Dr. Elan Ezrachi is the regional director of RCFP in Israel. A graduate of the Hebrew University with a Ph.D. from the Jewish Theological Seminary, Elan is one of Israel's leading informal Jewish educators with a specialty in Israel-Diaspora relations. He served as the founding CEO of Masa-Israel Journey as well as the CEO of the Bronfman Mifgashim Center. He is currently a Fellow at the Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education and he teaches at the Schechter Institute.

Rabbi Sid Schwarz is the international director for RCFP and is also be the lead faculty member in New York. Sid is a nationally prominent leader in the fields of Jewish education, Jewish identity and social activism. As the founder of PANIM: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values, Sid was one of the pioneers in the integration of Jewish learning, values and social responsibility and he edited several of the earliest curricula in the field. His book, *Judaism and Justice: The Jewish Passion to Repair the World* (2006) is one of the seminal works on Jewish social justice. He is currently a senior fellow at CIJL: The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership.