

Program Overview

Israel Quest is a Jewish teen identity project of the Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning in collaboration with the United Jewish Endowment Fund, The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, and over 75 local synagogues and regional youth organizations. The Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning is dedicated to lifelong Jewish engagement through high-quality educational and identity-building experiences in collaboration with educational institutions, community agencies, and synagogues.

Established in 1994, Israel Quest is based on the guiding principle that continuing Jewish education, linked with a formative Israel experience, will forge a strong Jewish identity in the hearts and minds of our youth. In order to achieve this goal, Israel Quest provides subsidies for formative Israel experiences to teens in 9th - 12th grades.

Please note: Israel Quest is not a trip provider.

To be eligible for Israel Quest funding, teens must meet the following criteria:

- Are Jewish, reside in the Greater Washington, D.C. area, and want to travel to Israel
- Plan to participate in an Israel trip approved* by Israel Quest
 - Minimum of 3 weeks in Israel
 - Travel during 9th - 12th grades or summers immediately thereafter

* For a list of approved Israel trips, log on to our website www.pjll.org.

- Family, day school, and synagogue family trips are not included

Israel Quest funding is provided by the United Jewish Endowment Fund, The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, and the Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning. **A finite amount of Israel Quest money is available. We encourage you to apply as soon as possible to ensure that you receive funding.**

In order to apply for an Israel Quest grant, you must complete both parts of the Israel Quest Grant Form. Please contact the Israel Quest office at the Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning with any inquiries: (240) 283-6239 or IsraelQuest@pjll.org. All applications must be submitted prior to trip departure date.

The Israel Quest Grant is a base subsidy of \$1,000. Sponsoring organizations can offer a merit based contribution which Israel Quest will match up to \$500. An amount of \$2,000 can be received as follows: \$1,500 from Israel Quest and \$500 from the sponsoring organization. Israel Quest grant checks are sent directly to Israel trip providers. Israel Quest grant funding will not exceed the cost of the Israel trip.

If a sponsoring organization's contribution amount is less than \$500, a second sponsoring organization may contribute additional funds to increase the amount to be matched by Israel Quest. Israel Quest will match the sponsoring organizations' total contribution up to \$500.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is Israel Quest?

A. Israel Quest is a program that strives to enhance a teen's connection to the Jewish community, Israel and other Jewish teens. Israel Quest promotes Jewish education and social programming as the means to building this connection by providing funding to teens who meet the above criteria with a subsidy towards an approved Israel trip.

Q. Who is eligible for Israel Quest Grant funding?

- A. To be eligible for Israel Quest grant funding, teens must meet the following criteria:
- Are Jewish, reside in the Greater Washington D.C. area and want to go to Israel
 - Plan to participate in an Israel Quest approved trip

Q. What is an Israel Quest Grant?

- A. An Israel Quest Grant provides funding to local Jewish teens to help offset the cost of an approved Israel trip. The grant is a base subsidy of \$1,000 to any Jewish teen the Greater Washington D.C. area. Israel Quest will match a sponsoring organization's contribution up to \$500. If a sponsoring organization contributes less than \$500, a second sponsoring organization may contribute funds to increase the amount matched by Israel Quest. Please note, regardless of the amount of money contributed by sponsoring organizations, Israel Quest will only match up to \$500. The maximum amount of funding provided by Israel Quest is \$1,500, which is received as follows: \$1,000 Israel Quest base grant; \$500 from sponsoring organizations; \$500 match from Israel Quest.

Q. What is a sponsoring organization?

- A. A sponsoring organization is any local Jewish educational organization. Synagogues, youth movements, and Jewish summer camps are examples of sponsoring organizations that may contribute merit based funding to be matched by Israel Quest. Contact the Israel Quest office with any questions about sponsoring organizations, (240) 283-6239 or IsraelQuest@pjll.org.

Q. How can a teen receive \$500 from a sponsoring organization?

- A. Teens who have a sponsoring organization may be eligible for additional *merit* based funding, which Israel Quest will match up to \$500. To qualify, teens must be actively involved in formal/informal Jewish education and/or the Jewish community and fulfill their sponsoring organization's requirements. Requirements are set by individual sponsoring organizations based on guidelines provided by the Israel Quest office at Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning. If a sponsoring organization's contribution amount is less than \$500, a second sponsoring organization may provide additional funds to increase the contribution. Please note: Israel Quest will only match up to \$500 of the total amount contributed by sponsoring organizations. Teens without sponsoring organizations or are not actively involved in the Jewish community are not eligible for merit based funding. If you would like assistance getting involved with the Jewish community, go to our website at www.pjll.org or contact Rachel Merritt at 240-283-6238, or rmerritt@pjll.org.

Q. Is there a deadline for applying for Israel Quest funding?

- A. All Israel Quest grant applications must be submitted prior to the trip departure date. A finite amount of funding is available for Israel Quest subsidies. Once all of the money is allocated, we are unable to process grant applications. Although there is no deadline for submissions, we strongly suggest that you plan accordingly and submit your grant form as soon as possible to secure your Israel Quest funding. Israel Quest funding is on a first received basis.

Q. Do all Israel Quest applicants receive funding?

- A. Yes and no. Until all money is depleted for the fiscal year, Israel Quest applicants will receive funding. After the money is allocated, Israel Quest applicants will not receive funding. It is strongly suggested to submit Israel Quest grants as soon as possible to ensure funding.

Q. Are other funds available, in addition to Israel Quest, to help subsidize trips to Israel?

- A. Need based funding is available, for more information contact Susan Friedman at 240-283-6239 or IsraelQuest@pjll.org.

Q. What is an approved Israel trip?

A. Approved Israel trips are those with a 3 week minimum stay in Israel (March of the Living is the only exception to this rule). The trip may include other destinations in addition to spending 3 weeks in Israel. Family, day school and synagogue family trips are not approved. For a list of over 50 approved trips check on line at www.pjll.org and click on Israel Quest.

Q. How does a teen and their family apply for an Israel Quest Grant?

A. Israel Quest Grant Applications can be found on our website, www.pjll.org or by contacting the Israel Quest office at the Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning, (240) 283-6239 or IsraelQuest@pjll.org. The Israel Quest grant has 2 parts; the first part must be completed and submitted in order to receive the base grant of \$1,000. The second part of the grant form must be completed and submitted if the applicant is applying for the sponsoring organization match. Both parts of the Israel Quest Grant Application must be submitted to the Israel office as soon as possible. There is a finite amount of Israel Quest funding available. Any grant applications received after funding has been depleted will not receive funding. Grants are allocated on a first received basis; therefore if an applicant submits the first part of their grant application before Israel Quest funds are depleted, and the second part of their grant application after funds have run out, the applicant will only receive the base grant of \$1,000 and not the merit based matching grant.

Q. When can teens travel to Israel using Israel Quest funding?

A. Israel Quest funding can be used towards approved Israel trips during high school or the summers thereafter. Year round programs after high school graduation and programs beginning in the fall following 12th grade are not included. A peer trip creates powerful bonds among teens and enables them to develop self-confidence and independence in a structured Jewish environment before a teen leaves for college. All grant applications must be submitted prior to trip departure date.

Q. If I have been to Israel before, can I still receive Israel Quest funding?

A. Israel Quest funding is available to local Jewish teens regardless of prior travel to Israel. However, a teen can only use Israel Quest funding one time. Funding is once per teen, not once per family.

Q. How can Jewish day school students participate in Israel Quest?

A. Jewish day school students also participate in Israel Quest through their sponsoring organizations. Israel Quest funding does not apply to Israel programs that are part of the academic curriculum of a day school (i.e. CESJDS High School in Israel.) The grant may be used for a different peer Israel trip.

Q. Can teens participate in Israel Quest if they do not have a sponsoring organization, are not affiliated with a synagogue, or are not Jewishly involved?

A. Jewish teens from the Greater Washington D.C. area may apply for Israel Quest funding if they meet the aforementioned criteria, regardless of their Jewish involvement. These teens are eligible to receive the base amount of \$1,000. In order to qualify for the additional merit based contribution of up to \$500, these teens must have a sponsoring organization contributing up to \$500 towards their trip. Eligible teens without sponsoring organizations will receive \$1,000 if their grant application is received while Israel Quest funding remains.

Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning
12230 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, MD 20852
(240) 283-6239 Fax: (240) 293-6202
www.pjll.org