

STEPPING UP AND FORWARD

NYTI 2019 (Phase II Year 1)
Evaluation Report

March 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **New York Teen Initiative (NYTI)** is the collaborative effort of UJA-Federation of New York and the Jim Joseph Foundation (as funding partners), and The Jewish Education Project (as lead operator) to redefine the New York area's Jewish teen engagement field. This ambitious initiative unfolds as part of a national effort—spearheaded by the Jim Joseph Foundation—in which 14 foundations and federations are working together as a Funder Collaborative to expand and deepen Jewish teen education and engagement in 10 communities across the United States.

The 2018–2019 program year (and the summer of 2019) marked a new beginning for NYTI. Following a 4-year incubation phase where new programmatic models for summer teen engagement were tested and evaluated, the Initiative entered the second phase. Distinct from the initial incubation phase, Phase II of NYTI is focused on supporting the expansion of those programs that have demonstrated a high level of readiness for growth.

At the same time, the overarching impetus of the Initiative remains to:

- Increase the number and diversity of Jewish teens served by summer programs, especially those from populations that tend not to participate in Jewish teen summer experiences;
- Strengthen and expand affordable experiences that are incentivized in creative ways; and
- Increase overall market awareness.

Summer 2019, the first summer of NYTI's Phase II, featured six programs: three Israel travel programs (NCSY's Next Step: Israel, JNF and AMHSI's Roots Israel, and URJ 6-Points Sci-Tech Israel), a domestic travel program (Eden Village Camp's Food and Farm Road Trip), and two domestic internships (DOROT Summer Teen Internship and NYU Bronfman Center's Summer Excelsator—a program piloted this year for the first time). Three of these programs (DOROT, Roots, Food and Farm) have been offered in expanded formats compared to the prior year by offering new sessions or implementing the program in new sites or in new programmatic formats.

To evaluate the ongoing success of its second phase, NYTI has partnered with Rosov Consulting to explore the following five questions:

- 1 In what ways and to what extent do NYTI programs demonstrate readiness to expand?
- 2 To what degree does the diversity of the Jewish teens served by NYTI programs resemble the known diversity of the Greater New York City Jewish community?
- 3 Has NYTI's investment in marketing efforts—specifically the FindYourSummer.org website and the deployment of Find Your Summer Ambassadors—increased market awareness of NYTI?
- 4 What is the ongoing impact of NYTI's investment in scholarships on incentivizing participation, at a time when the level of subsidization is projected to decline?
- 5 How has the new internship program—Summer Excelsator—fared? Was it able to successfully get off the ground, meet its recruitment goals, and meaningfully engage teens?



KEY FINDINGS

As NYTI programs set off on a growth trajectory, program staff exhibit greater confidence, and educational content is solid and continues to improve .



NYTI programs reach diverse teens across the spectrum of Jewish engagement, including substantial numbers of teens from families where not all members are Jewish, families with LGBTQ identifying members, and families from minority ethnic and racial groups.



The overall reach of the FindYourSummer.org website has grown exponentially over the 2018-2019 program year, representing a dramatic increase in market awareness.



In contrast to NYTI's early years, this year, scholarships primarily benefit need-based applicants. They serve to improve affordability for lower-income families more than to incentivize participation.



In its pilot year, the Summer Excelerator internship program is off to a strong start. As its leadership contemplates expansion in its second year, they are attentive to issues of staff capacity and quality control.





INTRODUCTION

The **New York Teen Initiative (NYTI)** is the collaborative effort of UJA-Federation of New York and the Jim Joseph Foundation (as funding partners), and The Jewish Education Project (as lead operator) to redefine the New York area's Jewish teen engagement field. This ambitious initiative unfolds as part of a national effort—spearheaded by the Jim Joseph Foundation—in which 14 foundations and federations are working together as a Funder Collaborative to expand and deepen Jewish teen education and engagement in 10 communities across the United States.

The summer of 2019 marked a new beginning for the New York Teen Initiative, which has transitioned from an initial phase of incubating innovative programmatic models of Jewish teen engagement over the summer months into a second phase focused on supporting the growth and expansion of some of the most promising of these models. In its second phase, the New York Teen Initiative seeks to:

- SUPPORT THE EXPANSION OF SOME OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMMATIC MODELS TO EMERGE OUT OF THE NYTI INCUBATOR AS THEY WORK TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY.
- GROW THE AVAILABILITY OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS (IN 2019, THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY PILOTING A NEW INTERNSHIP PROGRAM).
- RECRUIT TEENS THAT REFLECT THE NEW YORK AREA'S DIVERSITY IN TERMS OF LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IN ORGANIZED JEWISH LIFE AND FAMILY COMPOSITION, ETHNIC AND RACIAL BACKGROUND, AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION.
- CONTINUE TO OFFER SCHOLARSHIPS WHILE TESTING THE CONSEQUENCES OF A REDUCTION IN FINANCIAL AID
- INCREASE AWARENESS OF SUMMER PROGRAMS FOR TEENS BY MAXIMIZING THE IMPACT OF [FINDYOURSUMMER.ORG](https://findyoursummer.org).

SUMMER 2019 NYTI PROGRAMS

SIX PROGRAMS PARTICIPATED IN THE NYTI 2018-2019 PROGRAM YEAR (AND WERE IMPLEMENTED OVER THE SUMMER OF 2019). OF THESE, FIVE WERE PROGRAMS THAT HAD PARTICIPATED IN THE NYTI INCUBATOR (PHASE I).



NEXT STEP: ISRAEL

A program of NCSY that offers teens a 5-week competitive internship experience in Israel, allowing participants to experience working in a field of their choice while touring Israel and connecting with the land and with Jewish heritage through experiential learning.



ROOTS ISRAEL

A 3-week service learning focused Israel travel program run by the Jewish National Fund and Alexander Muss High School. Participants engage in such activities as farming, working with disabled soldiers, and supporting local disadvantaged communities, all while learning about Israeli history and Jewish values. In 2019, the program substantially expanded its reach by offering a second session.



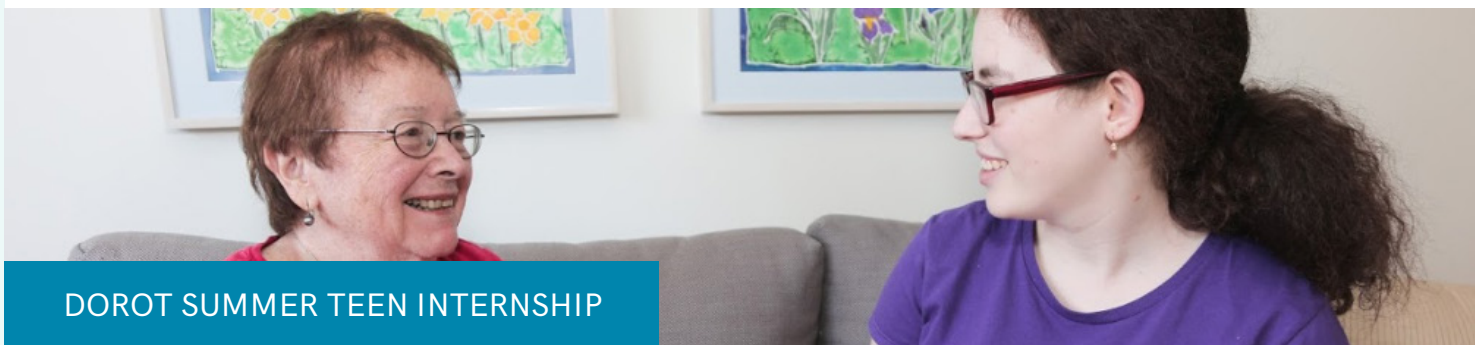
URJ 6-POINTS SCI-TECH ISRAEL

A 3-week Israel travel program that takes teens on a tour of Israel as a living laboratory focused on science and technology, allowing them to engage in an interactive learning environment that seamlessly incorporates Jewish values and history while exploring Israel's role as a global innovator in science and technology.



FOOD AND FARM ROAD TRIP

A 3-week domestic travel program offered by Eden Village Camp that takes 10th and 11th graders, many of whom are Eden Village campers, on a tour of farms and communities in the southern United States, allowing them to learn about sustainable food production through Jewish values. In 2019, Food and Farm Road Trip piloted a new version of the original trip, dubbed Project Pizza, where teens operate a pop-up pizza truck in a low-income urban neighborhood, where they prepare and sell (for a suggested donation amount) pizza from locally sourced organic materials.



DOROT SUMMER TEEN INTERNSHIP

An internship that offers teens an opportunity to work with older adults over a 4-week period. Through a variety of hands-on experiences in the community and on site, interns develop leadership skills and form meaningful intergenerational connections through a Jewish lens. Since 2017, two variants of this program have been offered: one in the DOROT Manhattan headquarters and a second at the Riverdale Y. Expansion to additional sites is planned for subsequent years.



SUMMER EXCELERATOR - PILOTED IN 2019

A domestic internship program of the Bronfman Center at New York University. This is a 6-week-long, paid internship program for current high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Teens are matched with internships at a variety of public and private sector employers throughout New York City. In addition to gaining real-world professional experience, the teens benefit from leadership development training and Jewish identity-building programs.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The following five evaluation questions are driving Rosov's evaluation of NYTI Phase II

- ① In what ways and to what extent do NYTI programs demonstrate readiness to expand?
- ② To what degree does the diversity of the Jewish teens served by NYTI programs resemble the known diversity of the New York area's Jewish community?
- ③ Has NYTI's investment in marketing efforts—specifically the FindYourSummer.org website and the deployment of Find Your Summer Ambassadors—increased market awareness of NYTI?
- ④ What is the ongoing impact of NYTI's investment in scholarships on incentivizing participation, especially as level of subsidization is projected to decline?
- ⑤ How has the new internship program—Summer Excelerator—faired? Was it able to successfully get off the ground, meet its recruitment goals, and meaningfully engage teens?

Data Sources



TEEN SURVEY: 223 RESPONSES (94% response rate)

Demographic data were collected from participating teens—about their past and current involvement in Jewish life, their age, gender, family composition, ethnic or racial background, and their sexual orientation—via a form included as part of the registration process.



PARENT SURVEY: 130 RESPONSES

A survey of parents provided additional data about household composition, the role of scholarships in parents' choice process, and the work of the Find Your Summer Ambassadors.



PROGRAM DIRECTOR INTERVIEWS: 6 INTERVIEWS

Interviews with the directors of each of the six programs shed light on their program's progress on the road to expansion and sustainability.



ORGANIZATIONAL LEADER INTERVIEWS: 6 INTERVIEWS

Additional interviews were conducted with senior leaders at the organizations housing each of the programs to better understand the parent organization's perspective on the program's progress and on the role of NYTI in supporting the programs.



SITE VISITS: 21 VISITS

Multiple on-site observations of each program were conducted by the Rosov team as well as by teams from UJA-Federation of New York and The Jewish Education Project. During these site visits, observers looked specifically for evidence that each of the programs is becoming increasingly ready to expand or replicate in the future.



FYS AMBASSADORS DATA: 11 AMBASSADORS; 158 CONVERSATIONS

The Rosov team analyzed data collected by Find Your Summer Ambassadors tracking their interactions with teens and their families.



FYS DATA ANALYTICS: DATA PERTAINING TO OVER 113K VISITORS TO THE FIND YOUR SUMMER WEBSITE

Web analytics of the Find Your Summer website were studied to understand trends in the website's growing reach over recent years.



SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS: DATA PERTAINING TO 212 RECIPIENTS

Finally, information obtained from UJA-Federation of New York about the scope of NYTI scholarships was also analyzed.



NYTI Programs in the Midst of Growth

Three of the programs seeded by the NYTI Incubator have reached a sufficient degree of independence, allowing them to thrive independently of NYTI. Other programs seeded by the NYTI have sunsetted for a variety of reasons (see Exhibit 1). In all, the programs that continue as part of the NYTI cohort demonstrate varying degrees of readiness to sustain the program. Three of the six programs have reached a larger number of teens in 2019, either by running multiple sessions of the same program (Roots) or by offering new variants of the same program (DOROT, Food and Farm). These programs report honing program logistics and codifying wisdom that can be readily shared when new staff are recruited.



One thing we did better this year was the educational component of the trip. Our program was already established enough that the staff had space to focus more on the content than logistics. ... All the programs are written down so we can easily replicate and delegate this next year. *(Program director)*

Achieving this growth was sometimes challenging. Through centralized programming, programs have learned to grow and leverage their resources. However, some programs still struggle to figure out some of the the operational logistics, such as offering a program in a new site, dealing with transitions in their leadership, or recruiting enough participants to fill additional trips. At the same time, all of the programs have plans in place to address these challenges and apply lessons learned this past summer in subsequent years.



Individualized Coaching and Interaction with a Cohort of Professionals Are Seen as NYTI's Most Valuable Contributions

As in past years, NYTI included a professional development component designed to support the programs' implementation and growth toward financial sustainability. The programs were offered targeted monthly workshops on topics such as marketing and recruitment. Each program was also offered individual coaching to support a specific need, such as curriculum development, recruitment, or teen mental health.

As they reflected on these offerings, program directors were more enthusiastic about the coaching they received than they were about the monthly workshops. It seems that an individual approach to supporting the programs (each with its unique needs) is received better than the one-size-fits-all approach of the workshops:



Coaching in particular is very valuable for us—we can't always benefit from the same thing as the rest of the cohort, we're all different with our own needs. Individual support is better for us. *(Program director)*



I worked with the recruitment coach, who was amazing ... I had [a coach] working on fundraising with me, and some of my reporting. All of those have been tremendous help. Over the three years I feel like I got a complete education. *(Program director)*

That said, many of the programs reflected enthusiastically on the benefits of getting together with the other programs and of being part of a cohort of professionals. Even as the content of the workshops received mixed reviews, the program directors feel that these sessions were worthwhile for the benefits gained from interacting with the other professionals in the cohort:



I know we're all going through growth plans—so growth and sustainability are the things I might want to talk more about with the group [of NYTI program leaders]. Learning how others are going about it, how they are building their plans to support the program financially. *(Program director)*



I like the group sessions. I want to hear what others are doing. ... These professionals are top notch, and we can bounce things off of each other. *(Program director)*

Finally, it wasn't only the program directors who noted the value of their involvement with NYTI. When we spoke with senior leaders of the programs' parent organizations, they too reported different ways in which involvement with NYTI supported their organization, whether boosting their credibility to funders or boosting the organization's ability to think "outside of the box" and showcase its creativity:



Working closely and connecting with The Jewish Education Project raises our brand. ... It raises our credibility. It might be helpful when we have to go out and look for additional funding. *(Organizational leader)*



It pushed us, big old institutions, to embrace new times. We're a part of reimagining the future of Jewish life. *(Organizational leader)*



I even got to present about this at the BBYO convention—I got opportunities to share about our experience [of working with NYTI. To show how our organization] is innovative and creative when it comes to the teen world. *(Organizational leader)*





NYTI Programs Continue to Reach a Diverse Population of Teens

The Rosov team used a combination of data collected directly from participating teens and a survey of parents to compile a portrait of the diversity of the teens served by NYTI programs. As in past years, NYTI programs continue to reach teens from across the spectrum of Jewish engagement. These include teens with robust day school education, as well as teens with little or no Jewish educational background. Our past research suggests that this mixture of Jewish backgrounds can make for a powerful Jewish experience for both groups: less-engaged teens learn about the relevance of Jewish values and ideas to their everyday lives, and teens with strong Jewish backgrounds expand their understanding of what “being Jewish” means for their peers.

Increase in Number of Less-Engaged Teens

Exhibit 2 shows the Jewish backgrounds and current engagement levels of NYTI teens over the past 4 years. Of note, while the overall profile of NYTI teens remained fairly constant when it comes to their Jewish background, summer 2019 saw a considerable increase in the number of teens who have been “not engaged” or “minimally engaged” in the past 12 months. Close analysis of data by program suggests that this is not likely due to the change in programs from Phase I to Phase II. With the exception of Next Step: Israel, all of the programs that have continued from Phase I have experienced a substantial increase in the number of less-engaged teens in 2019 (see Exhibit 3).

EXHIBIT 1 | CURRENT JEWISH ENGAGEMENT AND JEWISH EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF NYTI TEENS

		2016 (N = 139)	2017 (N = 224)	2018 (N = 249)	2019 (N = 223)
Current Engagement¹	Not/Minimally Engaged	--	15%	16%	40%
	Moderately Engaged/Engaged	--	40%	44%	37%
	Highly/Fully Engaged	--	45%	40%	23%
Jewish Background²	Nominal	17%	20%	17%	14%
	Modest	45%	48%	48%	53%
	Substantial	39%	31%	35%	33%
Jewish Education³	Limited Jewish Education ⁴	15%	13%	14%	13%
	Some Jewish Supplementary School	64%	65%	62%	67%
	At least 4 years of Jewish Day School	32%	35%	37%	32%
Family Members Jewish⁵	All	81%	74%	75%	83%
	Some	15%	21%	24%	16%
	None	5%	4%	1%	1%
Friends Jewish	All/Most	49%	44%	44%	34%

NOTES

¹ Participants' current Jewish engagement is calculated based on self-reported frequency of participating in Jewish activities of different intensity and length over the past 12 months. Current engagement numbers are not significantly different for the five programs that have continued onto Phase II and other (Phase I only) NYTI programs.

² Variables used to calculate participants' Jewish backgrounds include years of day school, years of supplementary school, whether all family members are Jewish, having had a Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, and frequency of Passover celebration before high school. Note that the method for calculating "Jewish background" changed slightly between Summer 2016 and 2017.

³ These Jewish education categories are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, numbers add to more than 100%.

⁴ No Jewish supplementary school and/or only less than 4 years of Jewish day school.

⁵ According to the 2011 NYC Jewish Community Study, 22% of all married Jewish couples in the UJA-Federation of New York catchment area are intermarried, and among non-Orthodox couples, the rate is closer to 40%. Additionally, in 2011, 12% of children ages 0-17 who were raised in households (including Orthodox ones) with at least one Jewish adult were raised in intermarried households. Taken together, these data lead us to estimate that the proportion of children from interfaith families who have participated in NYTI programs over the past four summers is close to being in line with the proportion in the general, non-Orthodox Jewish population of the New York City area.

EXHIBIT 2| “LESS ENGAGED” TEENS BY NYTI PROGRAM

% of Teens who are Not/Minimally Engaged	2017 (N = 144)	2018 (N = 206)	2019 (N = 223)
DOROT Manhattan	35%	55%	76%
DOROT Riverdale	40%	55% ⁶	64%
URJ 6 Points Sci-Tech	4%	5%	38%
Roots Israel	10%	14%	39%
Food and Farm	14%	5%	46 %
Next Step Israel	23%	6%	19%
Summer Excelsior	--	--	25%

Teen Diversity Approximates that of the New York City Jewish Community

Aside from their involvement in Jewish life, NYTI teens are also diverse in many other ways, including their racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. Comparing the data collected from NYTI teens and parents to information in the 2011 Jewish Community Study of New York City suggests that, in some respects, the diversity of NYTI teens is in line with the diversity of the community from which they come. For example, as seen in Exhibit 4, one in six NYTI teens (16%) identifies their racial or ethnic background as other than “white.” This is comparable to the 12% of New York City Jews who reportedly are part of mixed-race or non-white households. Similarly, 6% of NYTI teens report that Hebrew is spoken in their home, which comes close to the estimated 8% of New York City Jews who live in “Israeli” households.

In other respects, the profile of NYTI teens is different from that of the greater Jewish population of New York. Thus, 3% of NYTI teens report that Russian is spoken in their home, which is substantially lower than the reported 14% of New York City Jews from Russian-Speaking households—a population engaged in previous years by ARTEL (a former NYTI program that now runs independently of the initiative). One in seven NYTI teens (13%) self-identifies as LGBTQ or comes from a household with an LGBTQ-identifying member (14%). This is considerably higher than the estimated 3% of New York City Jews who live in an LGBTQ household.

NOTES

⁶ 2018 data were reported for both DOROT sites together. This table assumes that the percentage of less-engaged participants was roughly similar in both sites (Manhattan and Riverdale).

EXHIBIT 3 | RACE/ETHNICITY, LINGUISTIC BACKGROUND, AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF NYTI TEEN HOUSEHOLDS

	2019 (N=223)	NYC General Jewish Population ⁷
Mixed-Race or Non-White	16%	12% ⁸
Russian Speaking (Russian Spoken at Home)	3%	14% ⁹
Israeli (Hebrew Spoken at Home)	6%	8% ¹⁰
Persian (Farsi Spoken at Home)	2%	Not Reported
LGBTQ Household	14% ¹¹	3% ¹²

NOTES

⁷ Estimates are based on numbers reported in the 2011 New York City Jewish Community Study.

⁸ According the 2011 NYC Jewish Community Study “about 12% of all Jewish households in the area are biracial or nonwhite” (page 21 of Executive Summary).

⁹ “About 220,000 Jewish people [of a total of 1,540,000 Jewish people] live in Russian-speaking households” (page 21 of Executive Summary).

¹⁰ “121,000 Jewish people [live] in Israeli households” (page 21 of Executive Summary).

¹¹ Based on parents’ self-description of their household as including a person who identifies as LGBTQ. In addition, 13% of NYTI teens self-identify as LGBTQ. This was asked as an optional, open-ended question. Fifty teens (22%) chose not to answer this question; another 10% misunderstood the question as asking about their gender. Both groups were excluded from this analysis.

¹² According to the 2011 NYC Jewish Community Study “50,000 Jews [of a total of 1,540,000 Jewish people live] in LGBT households” (page 21 of Executive Summary).



Growing Awareness in the Marketplace

One of the important goals of the New York Teen Initiative is to increase awareness of available summer programs for Jewish teens. Two strategies have been employed in order to promote greater market awareness—one with broad reach and another with intensive and potentially “deep” impact. First, for the past 4 years, FindYourSummer.org has been curating and promoting a variety of teen summer programs throughout the Greater New York area.¹³ However, as necessary as it is, strong web presence is not enough. The evaluation of NYTI over its first 4 years has shed light on the importance of “on the ground” recruitment. To support and enhance the impact of the FindYourSummer.org website, NYTI launched Find Your Summer Ambassadors in 2019. A cohort of teen engagement professionals (typically synagogue youth educators) have been trained to connect directly with teens and their families, to assess their needs and desires, and to guide them to New York-area summer programs (those featured on FindYourSummer.org) that best match their needs. Below, we explore what is known about these two mutually reinforcing strategies.

FindYourSummer.org Grows Exponentially

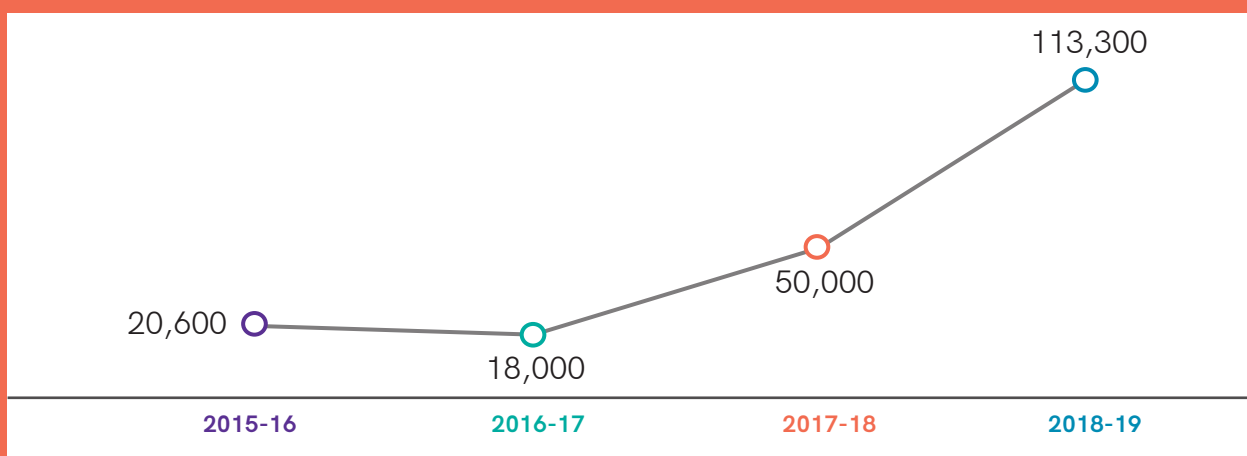
Exhibit 5 demonstrates the impressive growth of activity on the FindYourSummer.org website over the 4 years since its launch, as measured by the number of users who have visited the site each year.¹⁴ This growth can be attributed, in great part, to the hard work of the communication professionals at The Jewish Education Project who have been promoting the website using a mix of communication strategies. Between September 2018 and August 2019, more than 113,000 individuals visited the website—the majority of whom come from New York (76%) and New Jersey (5%), with a substantial minority from other states (8%) or from outside the US (11%). Anecdotal evidence suggests that at least in some cases non-US participants in NYTI programs have learned about the program on FindYourSummer.org.

NOTES

¹³ A thorough description of the considerations that led to the development of the website and some of the learnings gained while putting it together can be found at (see <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/soup-to-nuts-building-findyoursummer-org>).

¹⁴ Based on analysis of data from the site’s Google Analytics. A “user” is Google’s approximation of unique individuals who have visited the website.

EXHIBIT 4 | GROWING ANNUAL REACH OF FINDYOURSUMMER.ORG (NUMBER OF "USERS")



Find Your Summer Ambassadors' Effectiveness Yet to Be Maximized

The expanding reputation of FindYourSummer.org will likely support the expansion of New York area Jewish teen programs at large. It is left to be seen, however, in what ways and to what extent FindYourSummer.org contributes to the expansion of the six programs supported by NYTI over the coming summers. Find Your Summer Ambassadors is likely to be an important (although not the only) contributor to the ability of NYTI programs to recruit a substantially greater number of participating teens over the coming years. At present, relatively little is known about the effectiveness of the Ambassadors. Collecting more and better data on their activity and success will be a priority for the evaluation team in coming years.

The 11 members of the first cohort of Find Your Summer Ambassadors have, collectively, conducted 158 individual conversations with teens and their parents.¹⁵ The majority (70%) of those conversations have resulted in the Ambassadors making a recommendation of a particular program or programs. It is not clear, however, how many of these recommendations were acted upon or, conversely, how many of the teens who participated in summer 2019 NYTI programs were introduced to the program by an Ambassador (enhanced data collection planned for next year is expected to shed more light on these questions). We do know, however, that roughly one in five (21%) NYTI teens heard about the program "through participation in a Jewish organization/synagogue," higher than the 15% last year. While uncertain, this increase may be attributed in part to the work of Find Your Summer Ambassadors.

We also know that the Ambassadors have spent most of their energy on interacting directly with teens, rather than with parents. At the same time, prior years of evaluation have consistently shown that parents are among the strongest influencers on teens' program choice. Indeed, only 12 parents (10% of parents surveyed) reported ever being in touch with one of Ambassadors (most of these have known the Ambassadors for several years). And while these parents affirm that the Ambassador was an effective communicator and generally pleasant to work with, less than half (5) reported that the Ambassadors helped them make a choice about a summer program for their teen. It may be advisable to explore whether and how Ambassadors should spend more of their energy interacting directly with parents, especially of younger teens.

NOTES

¹⁵ The second cohort of Ambassadors, active in the 2019-2020 program year, will include five new Ambassadors. At least 10 of the original cohort of 11 will also continue to promote FindYourSummer.org as part of their role as synagogue youth directors.



Scholarships Primarily Benefit Families Who Need them

As noted above, one of the continuing goals of the New York Teen Initiative as it embarks on its second phase is to promote and grow summer teen programs that are affordable and that are incentivized in creative ways. To this end, and over the past 5 years of the Initiative, almost \$2 million were invested in scholarships, allowing over 1,200 teens to participate in FindYourSummer programs. In Fiscal Year 2019 alone, over \$385,000 was invested in 212 scholarships to support participation in FindYourSummer programs.¹⁶

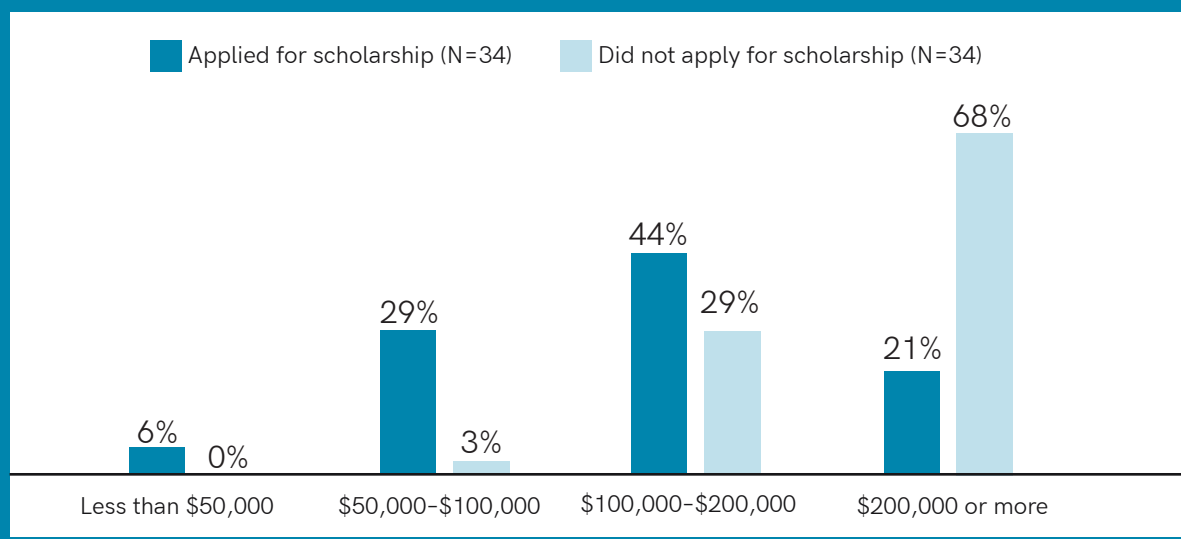
Two key questions from an evaluative perspective were (a) who are the recipients of these scholarships, and (b) to what extent have the scholarships played an incentive, making programs affordable to families who would not have been able to afford them otherwise.

To answer these questions, we first compared reported household income of families who applied for an NYTI scholarship (all those who applied received a scholarship) and those who did not apply. As seen in Exhibit 6, the median household income of scholarship recipients is substantially lower than for those who did not apply for scholarships. This suggests that scholarships tend to be need based. This conclusion is further supported by parents' responses to our survey. When scholarship recipients were asked about the role that the scholarship played for them, a majority (71%) reported that they could not have afforded the program if it were not for financial assistance. By contrast, only 8% said that the scholarship "made the program more attractive," with the remaining 21% saying the scholarship "helped but was not essential."

NOTES

¹⁶ This number includes programs featured on FindYourSummer.org that are not part of the NYTI Incubators. Of this, about \$189,000 or 95 scholarships went to support Incubator programs, including programs that were previously supported by NYTI (such as Sababa Surf Camp, ARTEL, and Zeke Teen).

EXHIBIT 5 | ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS AND NON-APPLICANTS



Finally, scholarship recipients are also more likely than non-recipients to say that “cost is an issue” in their decision to enroll their teen in a Jewish summer program, with 39% of scholarship recipients saying cost is “very much” an issue for them, compared to 8% of those who did not apply.

Given that NYTI’s investment in scholarships is expected to be scaled down in coming years, one wonders about the potential impact of a reduction in scholarships on programs’ ability to expand while continuing to reach a diverse population. On the one hand, it seems that NYTI programs have now reached a level of maturity where they are able to demonstrate their value to potential participants without need for additional financial incentives. On the other hand, even as some programs are already finding or are planning to find new ways to offer financial aid, it is not clear what will be the impact of reduced scholarships on the programs’ ability to include teens from lower-income families. Currently, 22% of NYTI families (11 of 51 parents who volunteered their income information) have annual household income lower than \$100,000. Interestingly, the majority of these parents had a teen participating in the more expensive Israel travel programs—seven families had teens in Next Step: Israel, one in Sci-Tech, and one in Roots Israel.¹⁷ Had it not been for the scholarships they received, these families would probably have not participated in these programs.

NOTES

¹⁷ The remaining two “lower income” families had teens in Food and Farm Road Trip.



New Summer Excelerator Internship Program Is Off to a Strong Start

The New York Teen Initiative has identified domestic internships for teens as an important, and yet to be fully tapped, engagement opportunity. In addition to the DOROT Summer Teen Internship—a program with a very unique emphasis on work with older adults—only one other domestic internship program was offered in the context of NYTI. That program (called InternNYC) did not gain enough traction and ultimately was discontinued. Thus, launching new domestic internship opportunities for teens was one of the goals of the New York Teen Initiative in its second phase.

This year, NYTI supported Summer Excelerator—an internship program run by the Bronfman Center at New York University. Itself modeled on the Bronfman Center's CLIP (College Leadership Internship Program), Summer Excelerator matched high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors with internships at a variety of organizations and companies (some within the Jewish community, others not specifically Jewish). In addition to gaining professional, resume-enhancing experience, the teens participated in leadership development and Jewish identity building activities.

In all, Summer Excelerator is off to a strong start. The program met its recruitment goals and was able to find meaningful internship sites for all 20 teens who participated in the program's pilot year. Based on our observation, as well as on the reflections of the program director, the program was well run and allowed teens to learn and grow not only Jewishly but also in terms of building work skills. In reflecting on their program experience, the interns talked about gaining important professional skills such as active listening, critical thinking, or learning how to listen and to have difficult conversations. Several of the teens share how meaningful their internship experiences had been. It was evident that the program went the extra distance to ensure that teens were offered meaningful experiences that truly supported their workplaces. They were more than pencil pushers.

Summer Excelsior now has ambitious plans to expand in summer 2020, setting a goal of more than doubling the number of participating teens (hoping to engage 40 teens). Two options for doing so are (1) running two Manhattan-based sessions or (2) expanding to a new location in an outer borough. Whichever option is selected, the program directors plan to begin the process of recruitment and securing internship placements much earlier than they did this year. Hoping to become more financially sustainable, they are also considering whether to continue asking internship sites to cover the intern's stipend (\$500 for the summer in 2019) and whether to charge an additional fee to parents in order to cover the administrative cost of running the program. With the wind of a successful first summer at their back, the program has great hopes for continuing to expand, as the program director reflected:



My trajectory as a Jewish professional would have been different if I had such an opportunity as a teen. If this program continues like that, any university can have one. We could create a workbook of how to run a program like this. (*Program director*)





CONCLUSION

As it embarks on its second phase, the New York Teen Initiative is able to position the five “mature” programs and the one new internship program on a path toward growth and expansion. From year to year, the programs continue to hone their curricula and to improve their on-the-ground logistics. As they grow, NYTI programs continue to reach a diverse audience of teens, including many who have been previously less involved in organized Jewish life.

The impressive growth of the FindYourSummer.org portal is likely to support and enhance this growth, and maximizing the impact of the website, for example via the Find Your Summer Ambassadors, will continue to be an important emphasis.

At the same time, several of the programs have been challenged by staff turnover. Recruiting and retaining a sufficient number of talented staff is likely to continue be one of the most important challenges that programs need to address.

The Rosov Consulting team is pleased to continue its partnership with the New York Teen Initiative over the next 2 years.

APPENDIX A | OVERALL REACH OF NYTI PROGRAMS OVER 5 YEARS

Program	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
DOROT Manhattan	18	20	20	20	21
DOROT Riverdale			11	15	16
URJ 6 Points Sci-Tech			28	42	31
Roots Israel			32	43	61
Food and Farm			36	36	47
Next Step Israel			26	56	41
Summer Excelerator					20
AJSS JAM*	8	28			
InternNYC*	15	18			
JustAct*		15			
PopUp for Change*		9	16		
Sababa Surf Camp**	38	70	56	48	33
ARTEL Teen Fellowship**	21	19	15	13	14
Zeke Teen Travel**			11	16	9

* Program no longer in existence

**Program was seeded by the NYTI Incubator and continues to grow independently of NYTI

APPENDIX B | SELECT 2019 DATA BY PROGRAM

		DOROT Summer Teen Internship Riverdale (N=15)	DOROT Summer Teen Internship Manhattan (N=21)	URJ 6-Points Sci-Tech Israel (N=34)	JNF/AMHSI: Roots Israel (N=45)	NCSY: Next Step Israel (N=42)	Eden Village: Food and Farm Road Trip (N=48)	Summer Excelerator (N=20)
Age	Less than 15	0%	0%	0%	11%	0%	18%	0%
	15-16	69%	71%	56%	54%	31%	80%	15%
	Over 16	31%	29%	44%	35%	69%	2%	85%
Gender	Male	50%	48%	74%	39%	55%	30%	55%
	Female	43%	52%	21%	61%	45%	67%	45%
	Gender Fluid/ Non-Binary	7%	0%	6%	0%	0%	2%	0%
	Something Else	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Jewish Background	Nominal	27%	29%	3%	26%	5%	13%	0
	Modest	40%	57%	85%	50%	40%	48%	50%
	Substantial	33%	14%	12%	24%	55%	40%	50%
Current Jewish Engagement	Not/ Minimally Engaged	64%	74%	38%	39%	19%	46%	25%
	Moderately Engaged/ Engaged	28%	15%	59%	55%	29%	27%	30%
	Highly/Fully Engaged	7%	10%	3%	7%	52%	27%	45%
Which of the following best describes your family?	We are all Jewish	67%	81%	82%	73%	93%	87%	95%
	Some of us are Jewish, some of us are not	33%	19%	18%	22%	7%	13%	5%
	We are not Jewish	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%



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