

*MATANEL FOUNDATION
ACTIVITY REPORT*

Program: *Experience Required*

Year: 2020

Please present your activity report according to the following lines. The whole rapport will not exceed 2 or 3 pages (as word document).

1. Name of the Program: Experience Required
2. Year of activity: 2020
3. Name of the report's writer: Rivi Beller
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6. Website / Facebook address of the organization:
<https://www.vehadarta.org.il/english/>
7. Number of active participants in the program: 50
8. Estimated number of impacted participants: 50
9. Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):

The most generous donation of ILS 50,000, made by the Matanel Foundation to Vehadarta, enabled us to serve 50 older adults. Participants utilized the job portal, which includes intake, assistance in writing resumes, personal support, computer training, preparation for job-interviews and tutorials. Over the passing year we have introduced new elements to the program in order to meet the unique challenges set forth by COVID-19; this has been an essential challenge for Vehadarta as: 1) our target population is the group most at risk to the disease, and 2) Israeli economy, much like economies all over the world, is experiencing a major recession and overwhelming unemployment rates.

10. The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):

With the Foundation's support, Vehadarta has been able to serve 50 unique clients, older adults over the age of 65, in the past year. We conducted intake sessions for each of them; assisted them in submitting 150 job applications and conducted individual assistance process with each of them (including workshops, trainings and assistance online and via the phone during the entire year). **The bottom line is that 50 older adults, over the age of 65, were placed in a quality position and were able to retain their job for a minimum of a year.**

11. The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future...):

We constantly receive feedback and learn about new needs from the thousands of people we accompany, on a daily basis. This input is used to adjust our program and meet the needs of the growing population of unemployed Israeli older adults. In addition, Vehadarta has implemented a policy of weekly staff meetings. These meetings are highly conducive to the organization's workflow and as a result to our

effectivity and ability to identify and respond to emerging challenges. Our work is also accompanied by research led by Ms. Rinat Ben Noon (PhD) of the Interdisciplinary Center in Hertzliya.

Until March 15th, 2020, Vehadarta has been on-track with the goals and objectives set-forth in its original application. On this date, mandatory quarantine and social distancing was announced in Israel, with older adults being identified at the population most at risk. Thus, the organization had to scale down its operation for several weeks, during which we have developed new initiatives to cater to the needs of our target audience. In terms of the placement process, we had shifted our focus to remote job opportunities. We have later witnessed a gradual return to our usual work rates.

12. Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

We have been adjusting our services to the COVID-19 workforce, and are expected to continue our operations over the coming year as follows. First, we are seeking and encouraging both employers and employees to pursue remote employment; needless to say, the Experience Required model is based on online platforms, and as such we are able to continue offering its services even today.

Second, we capitalized on the momentum of a program launched just prior to the crisis, the "Gilda" (a play on words combining the Hebrew words "gil" (age) and "yeda" (knowledge) and the word "gilda" (guild)), in which senior citizens who served in senior positions can serve as consultants in the fields of their activity, has been accelerating during this crisis. We have launched a campaign called the "**Gilda at Times of Crisis**," in the framework of which the program's participants provide the consulting services on a volunteer basis to businesses that are suffering due to the crisis. Until now, more than 50 consulting sessions have been done, and we expect to continue this effort over the coming year.

In addition, we have had to lead an appeal to the Israeli High Court of Justice to make the placement of older adult possible these days. Vehadarta has led a coalition of NGOs in an appeal to the Israeli High Court of Justice against the Israeli Government's exit strategy vis-à-vis the workforce, as Israelis over the age of 67 were forbidden from getting back to work. The appeal included expert testimony with evidence-based information on the populations most at risk from the virus, and supporting the claim that older adults should be allowed to return to work. As our team argued, if a 50-year-old with high blood pressure and diabetes, or a younger worker with a suppressed immune system can return to work by choice, how can the government regulation discriminate against a 70-year-old marathon runner and actively prevent him or her from returning to work? The many studies demonstrating the high cost of isolation to the older population – both financially and emotionally – underscore the importance of protecting the rights of older adults, since regulations like these negatively affect their legal rights and quality of life. *Shortly after the brief was submitted to the Supreme Court, the regulation was repealed in late April.* We will continue to keep our guard over the coming years with regards to older adult in the workforce.