

End-of-Year Report, "Crossroads" Seminar, Reichman University, Matanel Foundation

I am pleased to summarize a year full of meetings and experiences, which concluded with a fellows' seminar where participants presented the topic they chose to research during the year and on which they are writing their final article.

A total of 14 Matanel Fellows completed the year. One participant (Marom Kleinman) withdrew midway due to personal and academic commitments. The remaining participants completed the year and attended all the meetings. Attached to this email is a file with the participants' names and short bios.

Since the mid-year report submitted to the Foundation, 8 regular meetings were held, as well as an additional meeting requested by participants. This meeting included a tour of Bnei Brak and an encounter with fellows from the "Lishma" program, led by Miri Rosen. The meeting was dedicated to "difficult" questions concerning the Haredi community and reflections on building a shared future in Israel. Many participants described this meeting as the most meaningful event of the year. Therefore, I request that we include another "field visit" next year to take participants out of the comfort of the classroom and confront them with the reality they discuss and aim to change.

In the final meeting, participants completed a feedback survey. The summary of responses revealed the following:

Lectures that stood out—positively or negatively:

Particularly well-received:

- Roni Palmar – "Excellent lecture," "exciting, articulate, thought-provoking"
- Shirli Rimon and Rabbi Pfeffer – interesting, connecting
- Dr. Sefi Mandelovitz – received great appreciation
- Visit to the Haredi community in Bnei Brak – a paradigm-shifting experience

Lectures that received critique:

- Maya Jacobs' lecture – perceived as containing less call to action
- Prof. Reichman – some participants felt difficulty identifying with it

Meaningful moments:

- Sharing of personal stories – fostered emotional connection and deepened sense of meaning
- Opening and closing lectures – inspired and encouraged action
- Bnei Brak visit – described by several participants as "life-changing"

What participants are taking with them:

- A broad and long-term perspective on society and their own action
- Practical tools – policy papers, civic thinking

- Optimism and belief in the power to create change
- A desire to continue working in the fields presented during the seminar

Suggestions for improvement:

- Allocate more time for group discussions instead of lectures
- Suggestion for a follow-up program – tools for implementing a vision
- Include more public figures representing different worldviews

In parallel to the meetings, participants worked on the challenge of writing a personal vision. They were asked to choose a field, research it, submit an outline, then write a personal story connecting them to their vision, and finally submit a draft ahead of the fellows' seminar. By September 1st, they must submit their final and revised article, which will be printed in a dedicated publication.

Here are the topics chosen by the participants:

- Elchanan Aviv – Planning and infrastructure
- Ido (Pinhas) Ferstenfeld – Health service management
- Ksenia Mishin – Financial education and savings
- Hila Dor – Changing perceptions of the periphery
- David German – The role of the Ministry of Education
- Ella Barchana Lorand – National service
- Inbal Levy Geva – The housing market in Israel
- Ray Lisa Chihaia – A vision for the Israel Police
- Hila Gutfeld – Sustainable agriculture in Israel
- Gideon Bonwitt – A shared core in the education system
- Arin Rosner – Long-term planning
- Yair Morag – Integration of AI in education
- Peleg Winer – Diaspora Jewry
- Asaf Bek – Sports culture in Israel

Once the final articles are submitted, participants will receive the second half of their scholarship (5,000 NIS already granted). The articles will undergo professional editing and be printed, and a special launch event for the book will be held.

In the coming week, we will begin promoting next year's program, with the following timeline:

- August – program promotion and marketing
- September – admission interviews
- October – program begins with the academic year (first session: October 27)
- Meetings will continue to be held on Mondays from 18:00 to 21:00

In light of this year's insights and additional costs incurred, I request to update next year's budget.

This year's budget was 195,000 NIS. I request 210,000 NIS for next year, detailed as follows:

Activity	Scope	Cost (NIS)
Participants	15 fellows, 10 meetings	$1,000 \times 10 \times 15 = 150,000$
Refreshments	10 meetings	$1,500 \times 10 = 15,000$
Fellows Seminar	3 days	5000
Field Visit	Bus + refreshments	10,000
Management, facilitation, production	Dr. Adi Koll	15,000
Administration	Design, marketing materials, editing, book production and publication	15,000
Total		210,000

I would appreciate your approval.

I would like to thank the Matanel Foundation for initiating these think tanks and, of course, for the long-standing partnership. We conclude the year with great satisfaction, both from the participants (whom I am glad you had a chance to meet) and from myself and Reichman University.

I look forward to more joint initiatives.

Thank you and have a pleasant summer,
Dr. Adi Koll,
Reichman University