

Philanthropy in Israel

A review of *Sources For Funding - The Israel Foundation Directory*

by Eliezer David Jaffe, Devora Publishing, 2001; \$24.95

By Mitchell Bard

When many people think about Israel and philanthropy the immediate reaction is that it is a reference to American Jews giving charity to Israel. This is understandable given the large amount of money — several hundred million dollars — transferred annually to Israel. Jews have a long history of giving, *tzedakah* is a fundamental tenet of Judaism, but Israelis have been slow to create philanthropic institutions. This is in part due to the fact that Israel receives so much money from abroad and the focus of Israelis themselves often tends to security issues rather than basic needs. In this handy directory, Prof. Jaffe, a longtime observer and participant in Israeli social causes, provides information on the growing number of foundations working in Israel.

The directory entries provide basic information regarding the foundation's aims, types of giving and total assets. Unfortunately, there is no information on past grants provided by the foundations and little or no information on the application process, such as restrictions, deadlines and restrictions. Some entries offer more information than others and reflect the willingness of foundations to provide data and guidelines and the unavailability of much of the material from other sources. To be fair, even directories with much greater resources, such as the U.S.-based Foundation Center's directories often have little more information.

The book is primarily of use to Israeli organizations seeking funding for projects. It is less useful for Americans and others outside Israel because virtually all of the grants appear to be made in Israel to Israeli organizations. Still, it is useful to finally have such a compendium of charitable institutions and it will undoubtedly grow and improve as it is revised.

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