**Our Israel Perspectives: FAQs**

**Schusterman Family Philanthropies – Israel invests in Israel as a secure homeland for the Jewish people, a thriving democracy and an inclusive civil society that cares for its most vulnerable.** Our grantees work with many of Israel’s diverse communities, with a focus on encouraging dialogue across these communities, fostering shared society, preserving democracy and ensuring equal rights for all. In the U.S., through our U.S. Jewish portfolio, we support efforts to build deeper understanding of Israel and support for it as a key democratic ally of the U.S.

We recognize that when it comes to Israel, the issues are complex and increasingly have become defined by the extremes, especially in the public sphere. Through our work, we aim to help more people understand the nuances of the issues and engage in informed, respectful discourse.

Below, you will find answers to common questions we receive from grantees and partners. These responses reflect the beliefs and perspectives that inform the Schusterman family’s work in Israel. They do not aim to represent the views of our staff or our grantees. They also do not aim to respond to current events. Visit our Press Center to see our statements about Israel.

***What work does your organization do related to Israel?***

We have an office and team in Israel that operates under Schusterman Family Philanthropies – Israel and invests in Israel as a secure homeland for the Jewish people, a thriving democracy and an inclusive civil society that cares for its most vulnerable.Our grantees work with many of Israel’s diverse communities, and we also focus on encouraging dialogue across these communities, fostering shared society, preserving democracy and ensuring equal rights for all.

In the U.S., through our U.S. Jewish portfolio, we support efforts to build deeper understanding of Israel through education and first-hand experience, as well as support for Israel as a key democratic and strategic ally of the U.S.

***What are the core beliefs that guide your work in Israel?***

The core beliefs guiding our investments are:

* **Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.** We believe Israel must serve as a homeland for the Jewish people and as a democratic state that upholds the rights of all its diverse citizens.
* **Israel’s right to safety and security.** We support Israel’s right to address its security concerns and to protect its citizens while still striving for peace with its neighbors.
* **Israel as an equal and shared society.** We believe in Israel’s democracy and equal rights for all its diverse citizens, including Jews, Arabs, LGBTQ+, secular, religious, Mizrahi, Ethiopian, Ashkenazi and more.
* **Hope for Israeli-Palestinian peace.** We support a two-state solution in which Israelis and Palestinians are able to live side by side as neighbors, in peace and security. This can only happen through formal negotiations between both people.
* **The importance of the U.S.-Israel relationship.** We see Israel as an essential ally and regional partner of the United States.

Our views reflect that in 1947, the U.N. adopted Resolution 181, dividing Britain’s Palestinian mandate between the Jews and Arabs effective May 1948, thereby recognizing Israel as an independent state and establishing an essential homeland for the Jewish people, who, throughout history, have faced persecution, expulsion and threats of annihilation. Since then, Israel has sought safety and security in the face of near-constant threats to its existence and to its citizens.

***What is Schusterman’s position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?***

We support a two-state solution in which Israelis and Palestinians are able to live side by side as neighbors, in peace and security. We uphold the right of the Jewish people to a homeland and of Israelis to live in safety in the face of ongoing security threats. We also uphold the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people, who want to live in peace and provide better lives for their families and future generations. We believe the Palestinian people deserve a state as well and would like to see a peace process that results in two states. While we recognize a negotiated two-state solution may be difficult to achieve in the near term, we support it remaining a viable option so that Israelis and Palestinians can ultimately live in peace and security. In the meantime, we believe Israelis and the Palestinians must commit to working to create conditions of safety, security and dignity for all.

***What does Zionism mean to Schusterman?***

We define Zionism as the Jewish people’s right to self-determination and a safe, secure state in their ancestral homeland, especially after a long history of persecution, expulsion and threats of annihilation. Our vision of Zionism centers on supporting Israel as a secure Jewish and democratic state rooted in its founding principles of equality and inclusion for all its diverse citizens, including Jews, Arabs, LGBTQ+, secular, religious, Mizrahi, Ethiopian, Ashkenazi and more. We work with many different communities in Israel, supporting efforts to encourage dialogue across sectors, preserve democracy and ensure equal rights for all, and build pathways for people to live together in a shared society.

***How can Schusterman Family Philanthropies support racial equity in the U.S. and support Israel?***

We are committed to advancing racial, gender and economic equity in the U.S. We are also committed to supporting and strengthening Israel as a secure Jewish homeland with a thriving democracy and an inclusive society. While some may view these goals in tension with each other, they reflect our commitment to our core values and to the Schusterman family’s philanthropic vision to help both the U.S. and Israel better live up to their highest ideals and achieve more just and inclusive societies. We acknowledge these are deeply complex issues and many people have personal as well as political perspectives they bring to them. We believe that there is a space to honor different perspectives while still affirming our values.

***What is Schusterman’s position on the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement?***

We oppose BDS, and we do not support any organization that invests in or works to advance it. While many people describe the BDS movement as nonviolent resistance to Israel’s presence in the West Bank, we believe BDS is a pernicious movement primarily advanced by those who seek to shut down discourse and to delegitimize Israel in the eyes of the world. Its founders have stated openly that its true aim is to eliminate the Jewish state, which we believe is antisemitic and denies the right of Jews to their only homeland. We invest in several organizations that actively work to combat the delegitimization of Israel and BDS.

***How do these perspectives affect Schusterman’s grantmaking?***

While we do not ask our staff or grantees to actively support Israel, we will not fund organizations that question Israel’s right to exist or the legitimacy of Israel as a secure, independent, democratic state and homeland of the Jewish people. We also do not support any organization that invests in or advances the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement. We do not work with organizations that undermine or reject the dignity of the Palestinians, Arab Israelis and Druze or the democratic principles on which Israel was founded.

**Do we invest in peace efforts between Israelis and Palestinians?**

While we recognize a negotiated two-state solution may be difficult to achieve in the near term, we wholeheartedly support a peace process and believe in a two-state solution that enables Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace and security, able to pursue better lives for their families and future generations. Even as our work is primarily focused within Israel, it also rooted in our hopes and aspirations for peace between Israelis and Palestinians and within the broader Middle East region. To that end, we have invested in several cross-border economic initiatives over the past few years and also invest in organizations that are focused on strengthening democracy and diversity in Israel.