Taking Stock of a Strategic Redirection

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**Prepared for:**

Encounter

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Background

Since its launch in 2005, Encounter has sought to create a new paradigm for how Jewish leaders and communities learn about, talk about, and engage with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Bringing diverse cohorts of Jewish leaders into the West Bank and East Jerusalem to meetfirsthand with Palestinian civil society leaders, it has sought to catalyze and cultivate informed,courageous, and responsible Jewish leadership on the Israeli-Palestinian reality.

Until 2019, Encounter worked only with current and emergent Jewish leaders from North America.At that time, it undertook a strategic redirection and began to provide programs for Jewish Israelis, adapting its signature Leadership Intensive Seminar for an Israeli audience.Over the past four years, nearly 300 Israelis have participated in these offerings. The participants, defined as civil society “leaders,” have come from political, religious, professional, and geographic sectors of society and have included former Knesset members and government officials, media professionals and journalists, religious leaders and educators, and some corporate as well as nonprofit executives. All are assumed to exercise societal leadership in some fashion.

Encounter’s Board and staff now seek to take stock of this strategic reorientation. They want to capture and assess what Israeli participantsin Encounter’s program have come to understand of the Israeli-Palestinian reality and how, if at all, their leadership around and stance toward these issues has shiftedfollowing participation in the program.The Encounter team has an anecdotal sense that participants undergo a meaningful shift in their awareness of the relevant issues thanks to the program, but it is much less clear what individuals *do differently* following their participation. Encounter has not scaffolded its programming with pre- or post-program structures or activities, and the organization is especially curious to learn what have been the costs and benefits of this approach: has a lack of follow-up activity impeded its aspiration to change the status quo in Israelis’ relationship with the Palestinians?

At this time, the Encounter team seeks a partner, deeply familiar with American Jewish and Israeli Jewish society, that can help explore these questionsand support data-informed decisions about how best to fulfill the organization’s developing mission in this regard. This inquiry would seek to address the following specific questions:

1. How has Encounter impacted participants’knowledge, beliefs, and behaviorsin relation to the Israeli-Palestinian reality?
2. How has engagement with the program affected participants’ motivation and willingness to exercise leadership within their own communities on this issue?
3. What are the factors, within the program or within participants’ own contexts, that have enabled the exercise of leadership, and what are the factors that have inhibited the exercise of leadership?
4. How can Encounter better meet participants’ needs in order to cultivate and catalyze leadership?

Why Rosov Consulting?

We thank the Encounter team for the opportunity to propose how we could collaborate with you in this effort. We are uniquely positioned to support you because of our deep familiarity with both the content and context of your efforts in Israel and North America. Founded 15 years ago in Berkeley, California, serving North American–based clients, we opened our Jerusalem office more than five years ago. Since then, in work for Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, Gesher, Panim, and The Jewish Agency for Israel, we have helped Israeli and American clients better understand complex social and political phenomena in Israel. We know how to develop and implement research instruments (surveys and interview protocols, especially) that are sensitive to cultural nuances and norms in Israel, and we have become skilled at communicating our findings both to Israeli audiences and Jewish audiences outside Israel. Our team, in both the US and Israel, includes individuals with native proficiency in English and Hebrew (as well as Russian and Spanish). Finally, over the past 15 years, we have worked closely with organizations such as Repair the World, Makom, the iCenter, and The Jewish Agency who have sought to help community leaders and educators from outside Israel better understand the Israeli-Palestinian reality—especially through face-to-face encounters between Israelis and Palestinians. We would be excited to bring the sensitivities and skills we have developed in such workto the Israeli context.

Project Overview

The study we propose will have four phases, beginning with clarifying outcomes, then collecting data through a survey and interviews, and finally making meaning about what we will have learned.

Outcomes Clarification– First, we propose to conduct interviews with six of Encounter’s key stakeholders (volunteer or professional, in Israel or in the US) to distill an understanding of what they perceive as the primary outcomes that Encounter seeks to produce for Israeli participants. Importantly, this will also be an opportunity for us to listen closely for embedded hypotheses and assumptions that have and continue to inform the effort This preliminary step will enable us to then developevaluation instruments attuned to testing said hypotheses and identifying the extent to which such outcomes have indeed been realized.

Outcomes Survey– We will develop and distribute an outcomes survey to all the individuals who have participated in Encounter programs for Israelis since 2019, seeking thereby to explore attitudinal and behavioral shifts prompted by their participation. If response rates allow, we will segment our analysis with the goal of identifying those for whom the program has had greater and lesser impacts and what has contributed to such variations.

Explanatory Interviews – We propose to interview a subsample of 30 individuals (approximately 10% of Israeli participants) with the goal of exploring what lies behind the patterns identified through analysis of the survey data. Conceived as an*explanatory inquiry*,these interviews will focus on better understanding a limited number of select issues surfaced in the quantitative data in relation to populations in which you have a special interest.

MeaningMaking and Reporting – Because data never speak for themselves, we will devote time to a meaning-making process with relevant members of the Encounter leadership team. We will develop a deck that synthesizes both quantitative and qualitative data, and we will present this deck in two facilitated meaning-making conversations with different members of Encounter’s leadership groups. After these conversations, we will produce a public-facing Executive Report of our findings and the recommendations generated during the meaning-making process.

Project Details

Project Launch

We will begin our work with a 60-minute virtual meeting between key members of the Encounter team (our project liaisons) and the Rosov team members working on this project. The goals of this meeting will be to review the project components and timeline, clarify expectations on both sides, and determine appropriate channels and frequency of communication to ensure smooth progress of the work. At this meeting, we will also confirm who should be the stakeholders we interview as part of the hypotheses-surfacing and outcomes clarification process.

Phase 1:Hypotheses Surfacing and Outcomes Clarification

The first phase of our work lays the foundation for the data collection phases that follow. It is intended to capture the hypotheses of some of your major stakeholders about the ways in which people’s understandings shift following participation in an Encounter program and what actions they might take thereafter. Our evaluation instruments should reflect reasonable (rather than unrealistic) expectations about what these outcomes might be, and these initial interviews will seek to document these expectations.

We propose to talk with six (6) individuals you identify for us (senior staff members, Board members, and/or funders) who,in the course of a 45-minute interview, can articulate such expectations and also reflect on what factors might enable or impede such expectations from being realized. We will ask you to confirm withthe relevant people that they are indeed willing to participate in a conversation and to provide us with their contact information. We will conduct the interviews over Zoom, and, with the interviewees’ permission, will record them in order to aid notetaking.

Following the completion of the interviews, we will synthesize what we hear. We will then hold an hour-longvirtual debrief with our project liaisons to share what we have learnedand to clarify how these learnings will shape the foci of our proposed Outcomes Survey.

Phase 2: Outcomes Survey

As indicated above, we plan to field a survey to all participants in Israeli Encounter programs since 2019. This survey would aim todocument (i) the personal and professional profiles of the participants, (ii) what individuals learned from participating, (iii) shifts in their attitudes and beliefs, (iv) the extent to which individuals have taken actions since participating that seek to shift the current status quo in Israelis’relationship with the Palestinians, (v) what facilitated and/or impeded participants from taking such actions, and, finally, (vi) what, if any, additional resources alumni seek from Encounter. As should be clear, this will not be a satisfaction survey about what aspects of the program spoke more or less powerfully to participants; it will focus instead on the impacts created or not created by the program, as reported by the respondents in the aftermath of participating. The personal profile data we gather (regarding, for example, people’s political orientations, the social sectors they inhabit, where they live, and their professional roles) will help during data analysis with identifying the extent to which the program’s impact has beenvaried bycircumstantial or contextual factors. This might help indicate, going forward, which populations Encounter can expect to impact most powerfully.

We will share a draft English-language copy of the survey with our project liaisons, to ensure that it covers the full range of outcomes surfaced during the first phase of our work. We will review a first round of feedback to the survey in a real-time virtual conversation and will then make revisions. We will share a second draft of the survey and will collect feedback as annotations directly made on the draft. Following this second round of revisions, we expect to produce a final draft of the survey ready for translation to Hebrew and uploading to our survey management software, Qualtrics. (The native Hebrew speakers on our team will review all drafts submitted to us by the translation service we use.) After uploading the survey, we will seek to conduct 2–3 cognitive tests, in which we go through the survey online and in real time with test respondents to ensure they understand the questions and responses options as we intend. If needed, following the cognitive tests, we will make final revisions to the survey.

We plan to distribute the survey to all individuals who have participated in Encounter programs for Israelis. We will send a unique survey link via email to each participant so that we can track who has and has not responded and follow-up efficiently with those who have not responded.We donot expect to offer a financial incentive (such as a prize drawing) to survey respondents and will rely instead on Encounter promoting among its alumni the importance of responding. We will aim to collect responses from at least half of the participants, an achieved sample of about 150. We will provide the Encounter team with frequent updates on response rates, and we will determine with them when to close the survey and to cease sending out survey completion requests.

Once the survey is closed, we will clean the data collected and will probe the presence and scope of meaningful changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors as reported by the respondents. (If you have data about participants’ ages, gender, or professions, we could compare the respondents to the total data frame to check for non-response bias and weight the data to adjust for non-response bias that has emerged.) We will examine to what extent reported changes are associated with data collected in the personal profiles.. If possible, we will also employ regression analysis to assess the relationship between various demographic variables and outcomes.

We will prepare an Excel Data Report that details responses to the survey and where we observe meaningful patterns in the data. We will review this data report in a 90-minute virtual meeting with our project liaisons to start making meaning of what we have collected and to consider what questions are surfaced by the survey that we seek to explore further in the next interview-based phase of our work.

Phase 3: Explanatory Interviews

Following the completion of our survey analysis and debrief, we propose to conduct 40-minute highly structured video interviews with a subsample of 30 program participants. As noted above, these interviews will enable us to explore what lies behind the quantitative patterns we identified, what met the expectations of our project liaisons, and what did not. These interviews will be *explanatory*rather than *exploratory* in that they will focus on better understanding a limited number of select issues among populations of special interest. As explained, we will identify those issues in conversation with our project liaisons when we review the survey data. We will then develop an interview guide which we will ask our project liaisons to review before we start to collect data. We will recruit interviewees from among program participants who in their survey response indicate their willingness to participate in a follow-up conversation. Again, if interviewees permit us to do so, we will record these conversations to aid with notetaking. Once interviews are complete, and we have cleaned, coded, and analyzed the data gathered, we will conduct a verbal debrief with our project liaisons of the main findings surfaced.

Phase 4: MeaningMaking and Reporting

At the conclusion of the qualitative phase of our work, we propose to synthesize what we learned in a compellingly designed PowerPoint deck and comprehensive presentation notes. The deck will include both quantitative and qualitative data. We will review a draft of the deck with our project liaisons before finalizing. The final deck will be translated into Hebrew.

We expect that the understandings derived from our findings will be substantially deepened through a structured process of meaningmaking. We have scoped to facilitate two (2)virtual two-hour Meaning-Making Meetings with differently composed groups of Encounter stakeholders; this might first include an inner circle of stakeholders and then a broader group, or one meeting might be with professionals and another with board members. The discussions in these meetings will, we expect, help draw out the sharpest possible insights and will build buy-in for this study and its findings. The conversations should also generate a rich set of suggestions for implications and applications Aderived from the data.

Following these meetings, will draft a 7–8-page public-facing Executive Report of our findings and the recommendations generated during the meaning-making process. We will share a draft of the report with our project liaisons and will solicit their feedback in a real-time conversation. We anticipate making one (1) round of revisions before providing a final version ready for public distribution. Again, this deliverable will also be translated into Hebrew.

Our Work with You

We know that our work on your behalf relies heavily on the quality of our relationship and our mutual commitment to excellence. Based on our experiences of successful partnerships, we propose that:

We will be responsible for:

* Assembling a staff team appropriate to the demands of the work.
* Coming prepared to all meetings and following through on client requests in line with the scope of work specified in this proposal.
* Scheduling regular client check-ins at intervals to be determined and providing brief, email or verbal status updates as requested.
* Ensuring the confidentiality and security of all documents associated with the project.

You will be responsible for:

* Assigning an individual at the senior staff level to serve as the primary liaison to and planning partner for this consultancy.
* Informing staff and other relevant stakeholders of the work to be undertaken as per this proposal and helping to ensure that these parties are available as needed to participate in the work.
* Providing all information and documentation, as requested and in a timely manner, to carry out the work.
* Providing reasonable access to senior stakeholders for ongoing progress briefings, discussions, and problem solving related to the project.
* Coordination and workflow management to ensure timely completion of the work.

Both parties will be responsible for approaching each other in the spirit of partnership and collaboration. This means that we each:

* Inform each other immediately of any unforeseen changes, new developments, or other issues that impact and influence our work together so that we can both adjust accordingly.
* Accommodate each other’s unexpected scheduling conflicts.
* Agree to “err” on side of over-communication to keep each other abreast of all aspects of our work together.

Deliverables

The specific project deliverables associated with the activities outlined in this proposal shall be:

1. Verbal Debrief of Outcomes Clarification Interviews
2. Outcomes Survey
3. Excel Data Report for Outcomes Survey
4. Explanatory Interview Guide
5. Verbal Debrief of Explanatory Interviews
6. PowerPoint Deck of Findings
7. Meaning-Making Meetings (2)
8. Executive Report

Timeline

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Phase** | **Activities** | | **Target Date** |
| **Phase 1** | **Launch and Outcomes Clarification** | | **Weeks 1–4** |
|  | Launch Meeting | |  |
|  | Outcomes Clarification Interviews (N =6) | |  |
|  | Verbal Debriefof Interviews | |  |
|  |  | |  |
| **Phase 2** | **Outcomes Survey** | | **Weeks 5–10** |
|  | Survey Instrument Development | |  |
|  | Survey Uploading, Testing, and Fielding | |  |
|  | Survey Data Analysis | |  |
|  | Debrief of Excel Data Report | |  |
| **Phase 3** | **Explanatory Interviews** | **Weeks 11–16** | |
|  | Interview Guide Development | |  |
|  | Participant Interviews (N =30) | |  |
|  | Interview Data Analysis | |  |
|  | Verbal Debrief | |  |
|  |  | |  |
| **Phase 4** | **MeaningMaking and Reporting** | | **Week 17–22** |
|  | PowerPoint Deck | |  |
|  | Virtual Meaning-Making Meetings (2) | |  |
|  | Executive Report | |  |
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Professional Fees and Expenses

The professional fees associated with carrying out this study are $74,500. Reimbursable expenses are estimated at $250 for survey management fees.

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| Task | Fees |
| **Phase 1: Outcomes Clarification** | **$5,000.00** |
| * Schedule and Conduct Outcomes Clarification Interviews (N =6) |  |
| * Debrief Interviews |  |
| **Phase 2: Outcomes Survey** | **$20,250.00** |
| * Develop Survey Instrument |  |
| * Translate, Upload, Test, and Field Survey |  |
| * Clean and Analyze Survey Data |  |
| * DebriefExcel Data Report |  |
| **Phase 3: Explanatory Interviews** | **$18,250.00** |
| * Develop Interview Guide |  |
| * Schedule and Conduct Participant Interviews (N =30) |  |
| * Code and Analyze Interview Data |  |
| * Debrief Interview Findings |  |
| **Phase 4: MeaningMaking and Reporting** | **$22,000.00** |
| * Develop and Finalize PowerPoint Deck |  |
| * Conduct Virtual Meaning-Making Meetings (2 × 2 hours) |  |
| * Draft, Finalize and Translate Executive Report |  |
| **Project Management**(includes Project Launch, General Project Administration, and Ongoing Communication and Check-Ins, As Needed) | **$9,000.00** |
| Total Professional Fees**$74,500.00** | |

Project Team [Alex, Nettie, Yaakov?]

Our team will be led by **First Last, PhD**, Senior Project Associate. X has been with Rosov Consulting since 2015 and brings extensive experience in instrument design, data collection, and analysis in quantitative and qualitative research. At Rosov, X currently leads yyy. In the past, he led the zzz. Zohar will provide senior oversight to this study and will lead all client meetings and presentations of findings. X is based in [our Berkeley office / our Jerusalem office / the New York City area / the Baltimore area].

Additional support (including project management) will be provided by one of our talented project associates. X will also draw on the support of our Senior Leadership Team—Wendy Rosov, PhD, Founder and Principal; Alex Pomson, PhD, Principal and Managing Director; Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz, PhD, Senior Director; and Frayda Gonshor Cohen, EdD, Managing Director. To read more about our team and their skills, please visit our website at [www.rosovconsulting.com/team](http://www.rosovconsulting.com/team).