



The Jewish Community Day School Network

רשת בת י ספר קהילתיים

# Project ROPE:

## Roots of Philanthropy Education

### Teacher's Manual

Written and compiled by Elliott Rabin

Supported by a grant from the Jewish Teen Funders Network Pilot Incentive Grants Program, in conjunction with the RAVSAK Executive Committee

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# I. Introduction to Project ROPE

*Beruchim ha-ba'im* to Project ROPE! RAVSAK would like to thank all participating schools for partnering in a pioneering program of youth philanthropy. Nothing this ambitious and intensive has ever been tried in a Jewish school before. By entering this program in its pilot year, your school can rightfully boast its participation in this cutting-edge venture from the very beginning.

Project ROPE will give to a new generation of young American Jews the skills, tools, Jewish lens and experience to become lifelong learners, doers and givers. There are three core goals of Project ROPE: to teach teens the Jewish roots, values and imperatives of philanthropic giving; to give them an understanding of fundraising fundamentals including the grantmaking process and effective philanthropic methods; and to provide them with the hands-on learning experience of running a fundraising campaign for a cause of their choice and responsibly allocating the funds raised.

As a direct result of Project ROPE, participating students will:

- Understand how and why Jewish tradition has mandated philanthropic giving for thousands of years and what the implications are for us today
- Develop a basic knowledge of, and a desire to engage in, effective methods of philanthropy
- Experience the job of working collaboratively with fellow Jewish teens to identify and support causes of their choice

Project Rope is open to students in grades 9 to 11. The first year will include students in five schools, with more schools joining thereafter.

This Teacher's Manual is one of three packages that schools will receive for Project ROPE. In addition, RAVSAK will supply schools with two curricula: a study guide on Jewish sources of philanthropy, as well as an introduction to the theme of this year's project, including an overview and reflection upon Jewish texts.

Each year Project ROPE has a different theme that serves as the focus of the activities and resources. Changing the theme from year to year enables students to participate in ROPE more than once, exposing them to a new set of issues each time. Returning students will have the opportunity to participate in ROPE at a different level, serving as a facilitator and mentor as well as a participant.

The proposed theme for Project ROPE 2008-2009: THE AGED.

The aged we believe is an excellent topic to inaugurate Project ROPE. It is a subject about which many high school students know little. Problems confronting the aged are not particularly "hot"; young people will not find them regularly chronicled in the media. The students' own grandparents and elderly relatives are likely well off and cared for. And yet, the aged are a singularly vulnerable part of our society, composing the largest segment of the poor, having the highest suicide rate of any age group, and facing levels of

abuse higher than any other population. In Jewish tradition, of course, age is considered an index of wisdom, and Jewish sources are rich in material about the treatment of the aged. By forcing students to confront the problems of the aged, Project ROPE will show how philanthropy can bring together different populations under a common purpose to improve society.

Essential for the success of Project ROPE is a close cooperation between the faculty advisor and the school administration. The administration should have a copy of the Teacher's Manual and should be kept abreast of the activities of ROPE participants. The Project ROPE Committee will need the school's assistance in a number of different areas, including setting up a ROPE bank account, providing space for the group and phones for conference calls, coordinating on fundraising activities, supporting the school education program, and guiding the public relations initiative. In return, the school will be gaining increased visibility through the activity of the students within the larger society. Project ROPE will develop a cadre of students who can serve as dedicated leaders of the Jewish community in the future. The school should take pride in the activities of participants and enable them to promote the program on the school's website and through other appropriate means.

Each school establishes a Project ROPE Committee, consisting of all student participants. The Project ROPE Committee is the name of the grantmaking organization. From a legal standpoint, your school is the 501c3, and the Project ROPE Committee is acting as a part of your school in issuing grants. (For the Israel Committee, the 501c3 is RAVSAK.) Let your students know at the beginning that they are part of this Committee; you might even give them a certificate that confirms their membership. Belonging to this structure will increase their sense of the importance of the undertaking, their understanding of the formal networks of business and law within which they are operating, and their sense of unity in acting as a team.

The philanthropy efforts of Project ROPE are divided between the locality of the schools and Israel. 70% of the funds raised by each school are distributed to local charities; 30% of the funds go to projects in Israel. The Israel Committee consists of one student from each school's Project ROPE committee. The School Committees and the Israel Committee operate in synch: while the School Committees are investing in local needs and organizations, the Israel Committee does the same for Israel. Members of the Israel Committee share the results of their research with the School Committees, and they involve their colleagues from their schools in the decision-making process for grantees in Israel, thus guaranteeing that all participants have a stake in the decisions both locally and internationally.

Supplementing the work of the individual schools are monthly phone conference calls. The calls serve two functions. Half the call is devoted to progress reports and discussion of problems. The other half consists of a presentation and q&a with an expert in the aspect of Project ROPE that students are currently working on or are about to embark upon. Section III. Master Schedule contains a list of these calls, their dates and topics. Please review the schedule and let us know your expected availability for next school

year. These calls are mandatory for all schools; the advisor and one student must attend. Schools should rotate students so that they all have a chance to attend at least one phone conference. Students are encouraged to participate in the calls, ask questions and report on school progress. They must take notes and report any useful information to the other students in their School Committee.

Please go over the materials in this Teacher's Manual in order. The sections are arranged in the order in which you will need to use them. The various activities are presented in their chronological order during the school year. Most of these activities need to take place within a specific time frame, as given in the Master Schedule; the Public Relations Campaign will span the entire year, and the School Education Program is somewhat less time sensitive. Kindly give us your feedback on the whole and parts of Project ROPE asap so that we can incorporate your thoughts and concerns into the final product.

Project ROPE is a demanding yearlong program that asks a great deal of the schools, the advisors, and the students. We are all in this program together. The success of Project ROPE depends not only on the work within individual schools, but also on the success of all the schools working *beyachad*. Members of individual schools, especially faculty advisors, should be in unofficial contact in addition to scheduled conversations. Use each other as a resource and a support group. Distribute helpful information and documents, share success stories, and ask for suggestions as obstacles arise. Most importantly, don't hesitate to contact the RAVSAK program manager for guidance, complaints, or research, or simply to borrow an ear.

This Teacher's Manual is a work-in-progress. We ask that school administrators and Project ROPE advisors review these materials soon, supplying us with comments and changes so that we can finalize the manual within the next two months.

Behatzlachah!

Dr. Marc Kramer  
Executive Director

Dr. Elliott Rabin  
Director of Educational Programs

## II. Implementation

Below are five suggested ways that schools can implement Project ROPE. Schools must notify the RAVSAK program manager which of the five options they choose, and explain precisely how Project ROPE will fit into the structure of the school's offerings. For example, if number 2 is chosen, please clarify the relation between the students' involvement in ROPE and their participation in the larger club. If the selection is number 5, RAVSAK should receive copies of the course packet and curricula that will supplement the activities of Project ROPE.

These options are not exhaustive. If a school would like to implement ROPE in a different manner, please contact the RAVSAK program manager to discuss the feasibility of the proposed method.

1) **Separate club.** This would be the simplest and cleanest method of implementation. The advantage is that the club would revolve entirely around ROPE. There would be no distractions from participants' involvement in the project, as would exist if ROPE were fit into a class or another club. A disadvantage is that the group is somewhat detached from other activities at the school, although the project itself will require them on various occasions to engage fellow students and the larger school community.

2) **A subgroup within an existing *chesed* or *tzedakah* club.** Some schools already have a club of this nature that is well established and popular. ROPE would then be available for students interested in the particular engagement required by the project: more intensive Jewish learning, broad understanding of and involvement with philanthropy, engaging with leading figures in the community, making significant financial decisions through collaboration, and networking with students from other schools in the RAVSAK network.

3) **Class credit.** Participants would be allowed to submit some of the work they do for ROPE, tailored in collaboration with the teacher, for credit. Students in the class who are involved with ROPE can present some of the group's studies, findings and activities to the class throughout the year, enabling all of the students to benefit from the project.

4) **Full integration within one or more classes.** A school might decide that ROPE fits best as a component of a single class's yearlong curriculum. For a class in American history or social studies, for example, ROPE would give students a perfect opportunity to explore firsthand some of the aspects of American society and government that they are learning about in school, while incorporating that information into a Jewish framework. An upper level class in Jewish studies would find in ROPE a tool to integrate *talmud* and *ma'aseh*, theory and action, in a way that will naturally demonstrate the relevance of Jewish learning for the students' lives and work in society. In fact, rather than situate ROPE within one class, a school might decide to use ROPE as a way for two classes to cooperate across disciplines and break down the wall between Jewish and secular studies.

5) **A class on Jewish values/Jewish action.** ROPE could serve as the foundation for a class on its own. The class would examine in depth the question of what are Jewish values, studying Jewish sources *be'iyun* (intensively) with an eye to the ways that the tradition, in its pursuit of the truth, both suggests values and challenges them simultaneously. The course would explore the relationship between study, values and action, and engage in actions on various scales that reflect the students' discoveries. Project ROPE would enable the class to engage in a large, challenging, yearlong set of activities that can effectively focus the discussion on the relationship between values and action.

## School Implementation Form

Kindly complete and return to:

Elliott Rabin

RAVSAK

120 W. 97<sup>th</sup> Street

New York, NY 10025

Fax: 212-665-1321

Email: erabin@ravsak.org

Deadline: March 31, 2008

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

Project ROPE Faculty Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Implementation Method:

Our school will implement Project ROPE using method number \_\_\_\_

Explanation:

In a few sentences, please explain more fully how your school will implement Project ROPE. Kindly describe how ROPE fits in with the overall roster of courses, clubs, and activities at your school.

Please discuss the goals that your school has for Project ROPE.

### III. Project ROPE Master Schedule

#### 2008

By Mar 31	School Implementation Form due
Apr-May	Recruit students to participate in Project ROPE
Aug	Establish Project ROPE account through the school Investigate matching grant opportunities, through school and Jewish Federation
Sep—first session	Ask to set up a Project ROPE page on school’s website
Sep – Nov	Introduction; Project ROPE goals
Throughout year	Study curriculum on tzedekah and philanthropy
Tue Sep 23, 2-2:45 pm ET	Public relations campaign
Oct - Nov	Phone conference; introductions; R. Jonathan Spira-Savett on the history of youth philanthropy
Tue Oct 28, 2-2:45 pm ET	Fall Chesed project
Tue Nov 20, 2-2:45 pm ET	Phone conference; speaker: a philanthropist or administrator on vision/goals of Jewish philanthropy
Nov-Dec	Phone conference; speaker: expert on this year’s theme
Tue Dec 11, 2-2:45 pm ET	Start curriculum on Project ROPE annual theme
Dec	Phone conference; speaker: professional fundraiser Plan fundraising campaign

#### 2009

Jan—first session	Mid-year evaluation
Jan –Feb 15	Fundraising campaign
Tue Jan 15, 2-2:45 pm ET	Phone conference; speaker: assessing local needs
Late Jan – early Feb	Meet with people to assess local needs
Tue Jan 29, 2-2:45 pm ET	Conference call for Israel Committee with expert on Israeli needs and charities/nonprofits
Tue Feb 12, 2-2:45 pm ET	Phone conference; speaker: surveying local charities
Late Feb	Survey local charities; site visits, Request for Proposals
Tue Mar 11, 2-2:45 pm ET	Survey Israeli organizations: research, calls, Request for Proposals
Tue Apr 1, 2-2:45 pm ET	Phone conference; speaker: evaluating the finances of nonprofits
Week of Apr 7	Phone conference; speaker: allocation process
Week of Apr 14	Make allocation decisions for local organizations
Tue May 13, 2-2:45 pm ET	Make allocation decisions for Israeli organizations
Late May	Phone conference; speaker: evaluating effectiveness of grants; evaluating Project ROPE and suggested improvements for next year
Last session	Final check-in with grantees Final evaluation of Project ROPE

## IV. Best Practices and Recommended Procedures

The activities of Project ROPE were all designed with the guidance of best practices in mind. Here are some general guidelines, adapted from prominent studies on best practices in youth philanthropy, that can help maximize the potential of Project ROPE.

Recommended: “Best Practices in Youth Philanthropy,” by Pam Garza and Pam Stevens ([http://www.ccfy.org/toolbox/docs/ccfy\\_youth\\_philanthropy.pdf](http://www.ccfy.org/toolbox/docs/ccfy_youth_philanthropy.pdf)) is now the standard resource on the topic.

**Outside expertise.** Your school does not have expertise in all the areas the students might require for Project ROPE. Before the school year begins, the faculty advisor should make contact with someone at the local Jewish Federation who can answer students’ questions and give them extra guidance as needed.

**Faculty advisor = facilitator.** For Project ROPE, the students must do the legwork and make the decisions. The advisor’s role primarily is to ensure that students have the materials and resources they need to get the most out of the program. Secondly, advisors need to encourage students to stick with the activities, to perform them thoroughly and consciously, and to prepare well for all discussions and activities. Advisors may have to step in at times to help teach material or give guidance on procedures. They also need to know when to step back and serve as a “fly on the wall” as students take charge. The more advisors are able to step back, the greater the success of the program.

**Collaboration and consensus.** The core of the activity for Project ROPE involves working collaboratively and building consensus. Students must be encouraged to develop their own understanding of the issues, to bring their reflections to the discussion, and to listen respectfully to the views of other participants. The process of making decisions is equally as important as the results. The group must develop procedures that will enable all to buy into the decisions, whether or not they represent someone’s particular preferences. This may be the aspect of the program that requires some of the hardest work on the part of students and advisors. See XV. Definitions for a further explanation of consensus.

**Divide responsibilities.** For each stage of the project, ensure that responsibilities get divided equitably between all members. There will be a great deal of work to go around. Some of the tasks need to be performed by the entire group. Other tasks need to be split to ensure that all the work required gets done.

**Leadership.** Students will be engaged in activities that require them to act professionally and with responsibility. Help all the members take turns in leading different parts of the project, from facilitating discussions and presenting material to introducing the group to outside experts and conducting interviews. Cue them in to dress requirements, as needed. Have them send a note of thanks to all people who contribute to your project, in ways

large or small. Project ROPE will succeed to the extent that every member takes ownership of it.

**Adult – youth cooperation.** One of the strengths of youth philanthropy is the extent to which it requires students to interact with adults as colleagues in a shared enterprise. The many activities of Project ROPE will help maximize this kind of cooperation. The advisor should do his or her best to make sure interactions between students and adults run as smoothly as possible. Certify that students are well prepared for their interactions with outside professionals, so that they feel comfortable and the meetings are successful.

**Time management.** Project ROPE cannot be accomplished solely during the time of a club or class. A high percentage of the work for the program must take place at other times and at other places. Advisors must make sure that this work gets done, while trying to make the work manageable. Be sure to spread the work evenly over the course of the year, using the Schedule as a guide. It is essential that all students prepare well for ROPE sessions, so that they can participate fully and equally in the work of learning and decision-making.

**Documentation.** Take records of each stage of the process, documenting your activities during the course of the project. Have students take minutes of meetings when important issues are discussed and decisions made. Keep a Project ROPE binder with all memos, reports, pictures, tables etc. throughout the year. This binder will stand as a record of the group's accomplishment and may be helpful to students in future years.

**Jewish lenses.** Students will develop strong Jewish lenses on philanthropy through their study of the two curricula in the fall. Ensure that they keep those lenses on through the rest of the project by challenging them to discuss their work on Project ROPE with reference to Jewish values and texts.

**Keep it fun.** Bring nosherei to all meetings. Congratulate students on their accomplishments along the way. Have the school acknowledge their work. Throw a party at the end to celebrate their achievement. Students will be dealing with weighty issues during Project ROPE; they need to keep a balanced perspective and enjoy the process.

## V. Fall Chesed Project

### Goals:

- To perform *chesed* and to understand its importance—that philanthropy can never replace *chesed*, only support it
- To experience a service provider firsthand
- To come into contact with professional and volunteer workers in the nonprofit sector
- To interact with a population being served
- To learn to include research and reflection as part of social action

### Steps:

1) Find a time when the students are available to perform the project. Calculate travel time to and from the site.

2) Identify organizations in the local community where students would like to volunteer for a one-time chesed project. The project should be unrelated to the theme of this year's Project ROPE, so that their experience with this organization won't affect their judgment in allocating funds later on. For example, if the theme is environmentalism, you might perform service in an AIDS treatment center, a Habitat for Humanity building, or a soup kitchen.

3) Collectively prioritize the top three organizations in order.

4) A different student then contacts each of these three organizations. Find out if the organization can accommodate a one-time volunteer opportunity, and if so, the nature of the work involved and how long the project would take.

5) Students together choose one of the projects. Call back all three organizations, thanking the ones that you decide not to visit, and making arrangements for the one that you are.

### 6) Reflection

The main purpose of this reflection will be to help the students differentiate between their emotional responses to the activity and their ability to analyze the program with critical faculties.

A) Immediately after the project ends, the students receive a set of questions to spur their thinking and help them synthesize what they've learned. Questions might include:

- What did you learn about the issue the agency addresses or the population they serve?
- In what ways were your stereotypes or assumptions challenged?
- How responsive is the agency to community needs?

- In what ways is the agency succeeding?
- Are there aspects of the organization's work which you think should be done differently?
- Would you want to serve with this organization again?
- From a Jewish perspective, was the project successful?

*Questions taken from Just: Judaism, Action, Social Change, edited by Rabbi Jason Kimelman-Block and Geoffrey Menkowitz (Panim: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values, 2007) 136.*

B) At the next meeting, students discuss their thoughts on the project and evaluate the organization where they volunteered. Conduct the discussion within the framework of Jewish values learned in the curriculum. What values did the organization put into practice? In what ways did it seem to do so well, or less well? What values did the organization not put into practice? Do you think that it could put those values into practice while retaining its current mission and services?

## VI. Public Relations Campaign

### Goals:

- To publicize Project ROPE to the school community and beyond
- To build knowledge and excitement for the program that will serve as a catalyst for the fundraising drive
- To gain knowledge of the methods and media for publicity

### Steps:

Here are some suggestions for ways to get out the word on Project ROPE.

1) School website. Before the school year commences, advisors should encourage the school to feature Project ROPE prominently on its website, including a link with a separate web page.

Items that might be included:

Launch announcement

Description of program

Description of some of the activities, especially the chesed project, interviews and site visits

PHOTOS!

2) Other websites. See if people and organizations in your community will create “buzz” around Project ROPE by mentioning it on their websites and linking to the ROPE page on your school’s website.

3) Presenting at outside venues. See “School Education Program.”

4) Services/in-kind donations. Ask local businesses if they would like to contribute promotional material for Project ROPE. They might be willing to print brochures, make T-shirts, offer web assistance, etc.

5) Write an article for the school paper on Project ROPE. Students may also try to write for publications outside of the school, including local Jewish papers, synagogue bulletins, the local newspaper, etc.

6) Write a press release for the local media, including general and Jewish newspapers, magazines, TV and radio stations, etc. **Important:** Coordinate press releases with your school administration; a press release reflects not only upon Project ROPE, but upon the image of your school as well.

You might issue press releases a couple times during the year: the first one prior to the fundraising campaign, and a second announcing the awarding of grants.

Here's standard press release format (thanks to Jon Feldman, "Public Relations 101: The Basics," in Ravsak's journal *HaYidion*, Chanukkah 2006 issue):

"For Immediate Release" (Placed at the top of the document.)

Contact information (Placed directly underneath.) This is the name, phone number and email address of the person a reporter can contact within your organization for more information. Make sure a phone number is included, as many reporters, especially those outside of large cities, are more likely to use a telephone, rather than email. A name is required: do not direct reporters to a general department phone number.

Place at least one "spacer" line here.

Headline (Text should be bold, underlined and centered.) The headline should summarize the most important content of your release in a single sentence, (i.e. "Golda Meir Day School Student Wins National Science Fair").

Place one "spacer" line here.

### *Body of Press Release*

All text in the body of the release should be spaced at 1.5 lines. There should be a blank spacer line placed between paragraphs.

Introductory Paragraph. The first line of the body of your press release should start with a Dateline that includes the city where the release is generated and the date (i.e., LOS ANGELES, CA. – October 19, 2006). The first paragraph should answer the following questions in at most, two sentences: "Who?", "What?", "Where", "When?" and "Why?" It should not contain a quote.

Additional paragraphs should expound upon the first and contain all details relevant to your news, including background and statistics. (In other words, they answer the question, "How?") If you would like to include a quote regarding your event, it is commonly placed in the second paragraph.

The final paragraph is boilerplate. This is a single paragraph that gives the reporter some background information on your school. Boilerplates are often singlespaced.

End the release with either "###" or "-30-", center-justified and surrounded by at least one line of blank space. (With quotation marks removed.) This indicates to the reporter that the release has ended.

The website of the PR Newswire organization ([www.prnewswire.com](http://www.prnewswire.com)) is a wonderful, free resource for sample press releases. If you can, use the text of the releases on their site as an example.

Remember that the purpose of a press release is to suggest a story idea from which a reporter will write or produce an article. It should explain why your story is of interest to that reporter's readers or viewers.

The reporter is under no obligation to cover your news. It will be your responsibility to explain why they should. However, if they say no, don't pressure them unduly. You'll most likely need them in the future.

7) Media release form (attached). Each participant should have a parent or guardian sign a media release form demonstrating permission for the student to appear in promotional material and media relations efforts for Project ROPE.

*This form is adapted from the one found at [http://www.youthgrantmakers.org/SampleDocs\\_menu.html](http://www.youthgrantmakers.org/SampleDocs_menu.html), from the website of the Michigan Community Foundation Youth Project of the Council of Michigan Foundations.*

## Media Release Form

**This form must be completed by a parent or guardian. Please provide all the information asked for below.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home address:  
\_\_\_\_\_

I give my permission to the Project ROPE Committee to use my child's name, city and state, and/or photograph, videotape, or any likeness, and the use of statements made by or attributed to my child relating to Project ROPE, for publicity, and grant to the Project ROPE Committee any and all rights to said use without further compensation. It is my understanding that my signature below releases the Project ROPE Committee and the \_\_\_\_\_ School from any financial or legal responsibility for the use of any media relations/promotional material.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Permission granted: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

## VII. Fundraising

### Goals:

- To develop a relationship to money based upon Jewish values
- To plan, execute, and reflect upon a project as a group
- To learn methods of fundraising
- To gain comfort in requesting money for a cause students believe in
- To build reflection into the students' relationship with money

### Steps:

#### Guidelines:

- ❖ Coordinate all fundraising with the school administration. This activity, along with public relations, has the most potential to generate discomfort. Make certain that the administration is kept informed of all planned fundraising activities and that it gives them the school's imprimatur.
- ❖ Keep donors anonymous to the fullest extent possible. Of course, students will likely know the amount contributed by donors they solicited. Students should not be informed of the names of donors or amounts of their donations. You want to avoid creating any sense of shame or embarrassment concerning whether people give and the amount they give. Students must also not feel that fundraising is a competitive sport.

1) Before the school year begins, the advisor talks to the school financial controller about setting up an account for Project ROPE. The Project ROPE Committee will need to deposit funds in the account and cut checks to grantees. Ask the controller about school procedures for sending tax letters to donors.

2) Advisors should also talk to the controller about setting up a matching grant for Project ROPE. Explore if the school has a donor who would be willing to participate in the program in this way.

If not, ask your contact at the JCC if they have a fund or a donor who would be willing to set up a matching grant incentive for Project ROPE. They may already have a youth philanthropy fund precisely designed to assist initiatives such as ROPE. If they don't have a matching fund option, they may still have funds available as a straight grant (see 4C below). Obtain the paperwork in advance and help the students fill it out once the semester is underway.

3) Devote a session in December to plan the fundraising campaign. You might invite a professional from the Federation to provide some training in fundraising methods and potential sources of funding. We will also have a phone conference in December dedicated to fundraising.

Raising funds is obviously essential to the operation of Project ROPE. However, it is not the main purpose of the program by any means. Students should in no way be made to feel, or make each other feel, that their personal success depends upon how much money they raise. The fundraising campaign is entirely a group activity; success should be measured by the quality of thought and effort that goes into the planning, execution, and reflection.

That said, fundraising campaigns generally start out with a monetary goal. For Project ROPE, a reasonable goal is \$3000-\$5000 dollars (US or Canadian). That amount of money will enable the students to offer a substantial amount to the organizations they're considering as grantees. It is important to stress, however, that a campaign that raises less money is not a failure, nor one that raises more a success. For Project ROPE, the process is much more important than the final tally.

4) The campaign. There are many different ways of conducting a campaign, based on the people you want to approach for funds and the activity you design in appealing to them. Here is a breakdown of approaches according to the target donors. This list is designed solely as a guide for you to plan your fundraising campaign. You may decide to concentrate your efforts only on students, or on students and parents. Whatever plan your committee formulates, you should include at least one activity aimed at students. They are your most important funders; an activity that involves students gets the whole school aware of and participating in Project ROPE.

A) Target: students

Suggested Methods: Bake sale, concert, tag sale, race/walkathon

Promotion: education program (Section VIII), school website, pr, flyers, word of mouth

B) Target: parents in school

Suggested Methods: solicitation letter, silent auction, sponsored race, car wash

Promotion: Obtain permission from school administration. Obtain list of parents, or if unavailable to students, provide school with letter to send to parents. Alternately, distribute flyers for students to bring home.

C) Target: local foundations, and businesses

Suggested Methods:

- Research local foundations and donor-advised funds that might consider supporting this project. A development officer at the local Jewish Federation should be able to help here. There may be foundations in your area that allocate money specifically for youth philanthropy. Check also whether there are government resources designated for youth philanthropy.
- Draft a letter pitching the proposed grant. In the letter ask for an interview with a program manager at the foundation.
- Contact various Jewish organizations to see whether they would be willing to contribute to the project from a discretionary fund.

- Ask potential donors to inquire if their employers or businesses would be willing to contribute a matching grant. If yes, tell the business that you are willing to fill out the paperwork.

Promotion: Promote your project outside of the school. Speak with the person at your school in charge of public relations. Work with that person to craft a news item for local media highlighting the goals of Project ROPE. (See VI. Public Relations Campaign, Step 6.) Consider presenting your School Education Program at other venues (Section VIII, Step 8.)

The fundraising process must end by February 15 at the latest. It is important to cut off contributions then, so that the group knows exactly how much money it has available for disbursement. The group can now devote its energies to the next phase of the program: surveying local charities and nonprofits.

5) Reflection. Provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their experience of fundraising after you've finished the process. This exercise helps to develop a relationship to money that is mediated by deliberation and guided by principles.

Sample questions:

- How did the experience of fundraising make you feel personally?
- Did the experience make the participants competitive, or instead did it bring the members of the group together? Why?
- Did you enjoy the fundraising methods selected by the group? What did you learn from them?
- How do the group's fundraising activities relate to the values of Jewish philanthropy that you've studied?
- Are you satisfied with the amount that you raised? Do you think it is sufficient to complete the rest of Project ROPE successfully?
- Has your relationship to money changed through this experience? Explain.

6) After the funds are tallied, the group calculates how much of the money is available for local disbursement and how much for the allocation to North American and Israeli organizations. For Project ROPE, we are allotting 70% of funds raised by each group for local needs, and setting aside 30% for groups in Israel. The latter will be allocated through consultation among representatives of all schools.

Schools send the 30% in a check to RAVSAK. The checks will go into a single account for the Project ROPE Israel Committee.

## VIII. School Education Program

As the students learn about regional problems and organizations active in their community, they should give a presentation to share their knowledge and passion with other students at their school. This part of Project ROPE can be accomplished at various times during the process, in the winter or spring. If performed in January, it can serve as a launch to the fundraising initiative; if in May, it can be the capstone to the program, allowing students to present their accomplishments and enabling them to promote ROPE and help enlist next year's cadre.

### Goals:

- To raise awareness at the school of important issues confronting the local community
- To excite other students and teachers in Project ROPE
- To help raise money for the program
- To interest students in joining the program next year

### Steps:

- 1) Determine the setting of the presentation and the composition audience. Is the proper forum a school assembly? Various classrooms? Should the presentation be just for students, or should parents also be invited? Explore different possible occasions and venues for the presentation.
- 2) Arrange the presentation with the proper authorities. If you decide you'd like to present at an assembly, speak to the head of school to make sure that's possible and fix a date and time. If your decision is to give classroom presentations, speak with the teachers whose classrooms you intend to visit. If you decide upon another venue and occasion, make arrangements there first before planning out the presentation. Otherwise, you might not be able to give the kind of presentation you intended. Determine how much time they are willing to allot to you; have a rough idea in mind of the ideal length of the program.
- 3) Clarify goals. What do you want to achieve? List the goals in order and rank them. How much time do you have? Given time constraints, what is the most important information you need to convey?
- 4) Determine the kind of presentation. Will you give a straightforward talk? Will you write a skit, or a song, to convey your message? Is there audience participation? Will there be a technological component, i.e., pictures, PowerPoint, video, music? Most importantly: what roles are assigned to all participants?
- 5) Preparation. Now go ahead and prepare the presentation. Determine all the parts to the program and divide responsibilities equally according to interests and availability. Be aware of the resources that are available; for example, don't decide upon a video component before you know whether or not you will have a video projector where you

are presenting. Decide if you will be preparing handouts for the audience and, if so, who will copy them.

6) Dry run. Make sure you rehearse the piece at least twice. Everyone should know their part well and be comfortable playing it. If you are assigning people lines, make sure that everyone memorizes them and says them audibly and with appropriate feeling. Presenters will need repetition and some coaching, depending upon their comfort with standing before an audience.

*It is essential to prepare just as thoroughly for any technological components of the presentation.* This is an aspect that is too often overlooked. Technological roles must be assigned; at least one dry run must be performed with the actual equipment that will be used at the presentation. Otherwise, expect the audience to wait impatiently as computers don't boot up properly, proper programs can't be found or accessed, files come out scrambled, television sets are broken or not plugged in properly, connecting wires are missing, the speakers don't work or produce feedback, etc. All technology should be rechecked shortly before the actual program commences.

7) Assessment. After the presentation, meet to discuss how the presentation went. You might grade yourselves according to different criteria, such as preparation, content, organization of material, the actual presentation, use of technology, reaction of audience. Did the group meet its goals?

8) Other venues. Consider whether the group should try to give the presentation outside of the school. A presentation at synagogues or a JCC, for example, would raise excitement within the community about Project ROPE. It might also help bring in more revenue, especially if the presentation ended with a pitch and a flyer with information on how to contribute.

## **IX. Assessing Local Needs**

### Goals:

- To understand the needs of the local community
- To learn how to perform preliminary research into social problems
- To delve into the causes of problems, including economic, political, natural, and societal causes, as well as the interconnection between them
- To investigate how the problem has developed over time, thus engaging the students with local history
- To meet with community leaders knowledgeable in the topic
- To become familiar with organizations working to solve problems, both short- and long-term
- To gain insight into the relationship between such organizations and the efforts of local politicians
- Through collaborative effort, to reach consensus on the philanthropic priorities of the Project ROPE Committee

### Steps:

While you are immersed in the midst of your fundraising campaign for Project ROPE, you will need to start the next part of the program: assessing the needs in the area where you live.

- 1) Identify resources in the community that can help the students understand the needs in the area, and the organizations established to serve those needs.
- 2) Students should research the issue as thoroughly as possible. They should check the local paper(s) and magazines, government websites and publications, the websites of local activist groups, and newsletters of local organizations to collect as much information as possible about the ways that the issue affects the region in which they live.

For example, if the topic is homelessness, students should find estimates for the numbers of homeless in the area, how the area ranks nationally and statewide, information on where the homeless live, who provides housing, food and other necessities, what happens with homeless children and whether they are receiving proper schooling. They should also investigate explanations regarding the causes of homelessness, gathering statements from a number of different sources and comparing them to understand the biases of each.

- 3) Conduct meetings with two leaders of the community who can best inform the students about the local situation as it pertains to this year's ROPE theme. These people should work for an organization to which the students might allocate funds.

For example, a local politician who takes an active concern in the issue might be the right person to get the students oriented. If the politician agrees to meet with the students, the students should prepare by familiarizing themselves with statements, writings, and

legislation that the politician has produced about this issue. Such information should be readily available from the politician's office and/or website.

Other people who might be worth interviewing are longtime residents, professors, community organizers, and leaders of faith communities and other organizations active in the community. Someone at the local Jewish Federation might serve as an excellent resource.

Suggested interview questions:

- How bad is this problem in our region? How does it compare to other problems we face?
- What are the different aspects of the problem?
- Who is most affected by it?
- How has the problem developed over time? Is the situation getting better or worse?
- What does the government do to address the problem? How do the responses differ at the local, state and national level?
- Where do government solutions end and private initiatives begin?
- Which organizations in the area do the most to address the issue?
- Where do you think more effort, or new initiatives, are needed?

4) Students should also speak with a couple of people in the target community of the topic. Again drawing upon the example of homelessness, the students should speak to people who are or were recently homeless, perhaps in the context of a homeless shelter. Hearing their stories and perspectives on the issues will make the subject far less abstract, far more emotionally powerful. It will also raise the problem of “paternalism”—someone outside of a given community determining the needs and solutions for other people—and engage the students in the problematics of the relationship between giver and receiver.

5) Draw up a list of the needs in your community. Order the items from most to least pressing.

**Determine which item or items the Committee wants the grant to address.** This is one of the most important activities of the program. Your answer will guide you in your evaluation of the organizations, and will help you give guidance to the charities and nonprofits soliciting grants from you.

From this list, determine your **grant criteria**—about 5 things that you want the grant(s) you disburse to accomplish. From your grant criteria, derive criteria of programs that you do not want to grant. Both sets of criteria should be given on the Request for Proposals form.

Grant criteria may include:

- Target issue(s)
- Target audience
- Kind(s) of action: service, research, advocacy etc.

- Size of project: people served, region served
- New or ongoing project
- Duration of project—limited or ongoing
- Funding priority

6) During the course of your research and interviews, make an inventory of all possible organizations that seem potentially worthy grant recipients. Include organizations small and large, new start-ups and old established groups, ones that concentrate exclusively on the topic and others that do so only tangentially. At this stage, try to list as many different kinds of relevant organizations as possible: service providers (“charities”), activist organizations, community organizers, social entrepreneurs, research associations, and even other philanthropies.

## X. Surveying Local Charities

### Goals:

- To canvas the charities and nonprofits in your area that address the problems discussed in Project ROPE
- To acquire methods for evaluating the effectiveness of these organizations
- To visit the organizations and experience their work firsthand
- To solicit grant applications, learning to interact in a thoughtful and professional manner with nonprofit professionals
- To become comfortable in researching organizations

### Steps:

Having already finished assessing the needs of the community, you should now have a sense of where money is most needed.

1) Draw up a list of potential organizations under consideration for disbursement of funds. Do preliminary research into them. One excellent place to start is [charitynavigator.org](http://charitynavigator.org), a website that ranks different charities nationwide, provides essential information on them, and has a great deal of supplemental information to help guide your analysis. Another outstanding evaluative source is the Better Business Bureau, which maintains charity accountability standards, gives its own seal to charities that meet those standards, and evaluates a number of large charities according to its criteria.

Circulate a page of websites for all organizations being considered. Search them to determine the purpose of the organization; most organizations place their “mission statement” on their home page. Look at the range of services they provide, which should be available on their websites.

2) Through group discussion, narrow down the field to the top 10 organizations upon which the group will concentrate.

3) Site visits

- Call in advance to arrange the visit. Explain the purpose of the visit: to consider the organization as a recipient for a grant. Ask if the organization would be interested in applying for such a grant—otherwise, there’s no point to the visit.
- Arrange details of site visit, including time for surveying the site, observing the services provided, and then interviewing the director or senior manager. Each visit should last around one hour.
- Participants must visit the site at least in pairs, more if the ROPE group is large.
- Each participant should visit two different sites (except for Israel Committee liaison—see section XI).
- Come prepared with questions. Study the website of the organization in more detail prior to the visit. (Sample questions are given in Site Visit Form.)

- Take detailed notes during visit.
- Afterwards, complete a Site Visit Form (one per team per visit).
- Submit reports to advisor, who distributes them in a bunch to all participants.

4) Based upon these reports, participants decide upon a number of groups (around 5) they will invite to present Requests for Proposals. Document the selection process: the organizations considered, and the grounds for deciding which to pursue in the next phase.

5) Write a Request for Proposals (RFP).

Once you have focused your sights upon a range of organizations that you might consider funding, the next step is to send them an RFP. By this point you should already be in contact with the potential grantees. Give them a call to notify them that you have selected their organization for the next round of consideration and would like to send them an RFP.

The RFP is helpful both to you and to the potential grantees. The form forces the grant-making group to articulate its goals and priorities in making the grant. Simultaneously, it forces the grantees to let you know that they're serious, and to come up with a plausible plan of action. After you have allocated the funds, you will be able to evaluate the success of the programs funded based upon the plan of action described in the RFP.

The attached RFP provides a suggested format for you to use. Feel free to adapt this form according to the needs and vision of your ROPE group. As you see, the form requires a good deal of thought before it can be filled out. Each group should take time to discuss the way that it would complete the form, in the process clarifying the kind of services it is looking to support.

*This RFP is adapted from the one found at [http://www.youthgrantmakers.org/SampleDocs\\_menu.html](http://www.youthgrantmakers.org/SampleDocs_menu.html), from the website of the Michigan Community Foundation Youth Project of the Council of Michigan Foundations.*

Start with a cover letter. The cover letter introduces the grantmaking organization, brings out the main goals of the grant, and establishes a personal tone of contact between you and the potential grantees. Attached is a sample cover letter from the Rose Youth Foundation for you to consult as you write your own letter.

*Thanks to the Rose Community Foundation for permission to use this document.*

## Site Visit Form

Names of participants: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization visited: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/time of visitation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) and position(s) of person(s) interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

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### 1) Impressions of site

a) Describe the site: the area in which it is situated, the building in which it is housed, its condition, the rooms it has and their uses, etc.

b) Describe the activities at the site: the services provided, the people served, the people providing the services, etc. Summarize your impressions of the quality of the services and the professionalism of the staff and volunteers (if applicable).

### 2) Interview

Interview either the director of the organization or someone else in senior management.

Ask candid questions that will help you understand the organization's goals, the vision of the management, and its effectiveness at meeting the needs of the community.

Questions you might ask include:

- How did your organization begin? Why was it formed? Has its mission changed in recent years?
- What needs of the community does your organization meet?
- What population(s), and how many people, do you serve?
- How long do most clients remain with the organization?
- Does the organization help clients become independent?
- Does it partner with other organizations in servicing people?
- Where does your money come from?
- What do you see as the strengths of your organization? What weaknesses?
- What do you see the organization accomplishing in the future?
- What new programs would you start if you had more money?

**Important:** This list is not prescriptive. Students should prepare their own list of questions based upon their understanding of the issues and their research into the organization that they visit.

3) Any additional comments or observations

4) Overall impression and recommendation to the group

[RFP Cover Letter]



January 31, 2007

Dear Potential Grantee:

Six years ago, Rose Community Foundation created a program called Rose Youth Foundation that brings together diverse Jewish teens to learn about philanthropic concepts and grantmaking. This year our goal is to give away \$50,000 to nonprofit organizations in the Greater Denver area to help improve our community. Rose Youth Foundation has decided to grant up to \$45,000 to organizations with programs and services that:

- 1. Offer new, innovative approaches to engage Jewish teens ages 12-18 in Jewish life**
- 2. Promote acceptance and respect between high-school and college-age Jews and non-Jews**
- 3. Support refugees who have fled their country of origin for fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, political opinion, or who are fleeing conflict.**

The remaining \$5,000 will support Denver's Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness, which we believe is the best approach to one of the largest current issues confronting the Denver community today. The Jewish ideal of *tikkun olam* (to heal the world) teaches that we must always work to make the world a better place. Through this grant, we believe that we are performing the *mitzvah* of *tikkun olam* and truly making an impact in our community.

We strongly encourage you take advantage of this opportunity in order to further your own efforts in strengthening our community. With your assistance, we hope to make our 2007 experience as successful as past years.

Thank you for your time. We look forward to receiving your proposals by March 7.

Sincerely,

Rose Youth Foundation Members  
[add names here]

# Request For Proposals

DEADLINE: [time], [day], [month and date], [year]

The Project ROPE Committee of [school] announces the availability of grant funds to support projects for:

[insert description of grant]

*NOTE: Suggested grant request is in the \$[insert dollar amount] to \$[insert dollar amount] range.*

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Any nonprofit organization with 501c3 status located in the [insert city or region name] area that is in need of funding for programs that [state what the programs do].

In evaluating each application, funding decisions will be made based on the following criteria. Priority consideration will be given to programs that:

- [criterion for grant]
- [criterion for grant]
- [criterion for grant]
- [criterion for grant]
- [criterion for grant]

We will not fund:

- [category]
- [category]
- [category]

## **HOW TO APPLY**

A grant applicant must:

1. Submit **[number] copies** and an original of the Project ROPE Committee's Request for Proposals along with the required attachments (see page 4). Applications will NOT be considered by the Committee if this requirement is not met.

2. Send complete applications and materials to:

[name]

[street address]

[city]

[state]

[zip code]

Applications may also be submitted electronically to [email address].

### **REVIEW PROCESS**

Each application will be reviewed carefully. The members of the Committee will make all funding decisions by [month]. All applicants will be notified by mail of the decisions.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Date:

Name of organization:

Name of fiduciary (if applicable):

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. PROJECT INFORMATION**

Project name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person submitting this application: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of grant (one sentence): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number of participants: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of volunteers: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount requested: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total project cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Project period: Start date \_\_\_\_\_ End date \_\_\_\_\_

Geographic service area: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of Applicant Title Date

Please provide the following information in this order. Use these headings, subheadings and numbers provided in your own word processing format, thus leaving flexibility for length of response.

**I. NARRATIVE** (Not to exceed 2 typed pages)

**A. Summary**

Begin with a half-page summary. Briefly explain why you are requesting this grant, what outcomes you hope to achieve, and how you will spend the funds if the grant is made.

**B. Project Information**

1. Please state what you are asking the Project ROPE Committee to fund.
2. Who will be served, including a) total number served b) age range c) location.
3. Explain how the project will meet the grant criteria listed above.
4. What is the timetable for implementation of the project? Is it a new project, or ongoing?
5. How do you plan to publicize/promote your project?
6. How will you evaluate the proposed outcomes of your project?

**C. Organization Information**

1. Give a brief history of your organization, including a statement of its purposes and services.
2. Please supply the organization's track record of successes with the proposed program.
3. If it is a new program, please explain why it will be successful.

**D. Financial Information**

1. If the total project budget is greater than the amount requested, from what sources will the other necessary funds be obtained, and what funds have been raised to date?
2. What financial resources will be available for the continuation of this project?

**II. ATTACHMENTS**

Please attach:

- A. One copy of a detailed proposed budget for the grant.
- B. One copy of the organization's most recent annual report (if available).
- C. A copy of the IRS Determination Letter indicating tax-exempt status.
- D. Annual budget and financial statements (if available).

## **XI. Israeli Needs & Charities**

### Goals:

- To learn about how the theme of this year's Project ROPE affects Israeli society
- To be exposed to issues affecting life in Israel that students likely would not encounter through other means (traveling, history books, newspapers)
- To learn about Israeli organizations dedicated to finding solutions to the problems addressed
- To expose students to the ramifications of what they've studied upon a larger scale

### Steps:

First read sections IX and X. The Israel Committee will perform the same activities, with adaptations given the distance among committee members and between students and the target needs in Israel.

Although the Israel Committee will do the bulk of the work in this section, they will involve the other students at critical phases (needs assessment, grant prioritization, and allocation), thus ensuring that all students participate in learning more about Israel and taking action to improve life there.

1) Select one person in your Project ROPE Committee to serve as the liaison to the Project ROPE Israel Committee. Send that student's name to the RAVSAK program manager.

2) There will be a conference call in late January (currently scheduled for January 29<sup>th</sup>) among faculty advisors, student liaisons and the RAVSAK program manager. At that call, an expert on the annual theme will discuss the needs of Israeli society, and survey Israeli charities and nonprofit organizations that currently provide services and advocacy on this issue.

Student should interview the expert on Israeli needs. Refer to section IX. Assessing Local Needs, Step 3, for suggested questions.

3) Liaisons present the information from the conference call to their school committees. Within their schools, students determine grant priorities for Israel (see IX. Assessing Local Needs, Step 5).

4) Liaisons research different Israeli organizations as potential grantees. Through email contact, they assemble a master list. (Other students who are not liaisons can also help on this step.) All students should examine the websites of every organization on the list to familiarize themselves with the mission and programs of each potential grantee.

5) At a subsequent phone call, liaisons discuss grant priorities, based upon input from school committees. They arrive at priorities for Israel Committee through reasoned argument and consensus building.

Armed with grant priorities, liaisons then narrow down the list of potential grantees to 10.

6) Conduct phone interviews with representatives from the organizations selected. Each Israeli charity or nonprofit likely has an office somewhere in North America, if not several. Call that office to arrange for an interview with an appropriate manager.

Each liaison conducts an interview with two people. Students may decide whether they prefer to conduct the interviews in pairs, as a conference call; if so, students will need to conduct more than two interviews. Students must take notes during the interview and write up an Interview Form (see below). Interview forms should be sent to the RAVSAK program manager, who will distribute them in a package to all liaisons.

7) Based upon these reports, liaisons conduct another conference call to choose a number of groups (around 5) they will invite to present Requests for Proposals. Document the selection process: the organizations considered, and the grounds for deciding which to pursue in the next phase. (See X. Surveying Local Charities, Step 5 on the process and form for Request for Proposals.)

## Israel Committee Interview Form

Name(s) of participant(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Organization discussed: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/time of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) and position(s) of person(s) interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

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### 1) Interview

Interview either the director of the organization or someone else in senior management. Ask candid questions that will help you understand the organization's goals, the vision of the management, and its effectiveness at meeting the needs of the community.

Questions you might ask include:

- How did your organization begin?
- What needs of the community does your organization meet?
- Whom do you serve?
- How many people does the organization serve?
- How long do most clients remain with the organization?
- Does the organization help clients become independent?
- Does it partner with other organization in servicing people?
- Where does your money come from?
- What do you see as the strengths of your organization? What weaknesses?
- What do you see the organization accomplishing in the future?
- What new programs would you start if you had more money?

**Important:** This list is not prescriptive. Students should prepare their own list of questions based upon their own understanding of the issues and their research into the organization that they visit.

2) Any additional comments or observations

3) Overall impression and recommendation to the group

## **XII. Local Allocation**

### Goals:

- To experience the joy and responsibility of allocating funds to worthy programs that can have a demonstrable impact, improving lives
- To work through the hard process of collective decision making
- To become familiar with RFPs and annual reports, and to learn how to read them carefully
- To learn how to make hard decisions individually and be able to defend those decisions in front of one's peers
- To listen closely to the arguments of others in an attempt to come to the best decision for the group overall

### Steps:

Steps 1-4 are performed by students independently, prior to the allocation meeting.

1) Every student receives a copy of all the RFPs submitted by potential grantees. These should be analyzed and studied carefully. Questions to be considered:

- What does the organization propose doing with the money?
- How clear and well thought out is the program?
- How relevant is the program to the area you wish to fund?
- Does the program meet the core needs that you have identified? How well or poorly does it meet those needs?
- Examine the money requested. Does the money sound adequate, or too low or high? How much is allocated to overhead vs. the actual program? Is the money more than the group wants to spend?
- Consider the time frame: does it seem reasonable for the scope of the program?

2) Look over the annual reports and financial statements submitted by the organizations.

- What do the services offered and pictures chosen tell you about the priorities of the organization?
- Examine the financial tables. How much do they fund and to whom? How does the amount they spend on programs compare to the amount spent on overhead (salaries, office expenses, etc.)?
- From where does the organization get most of its money? Does it have a large or small budget? Does it look stable, from a business perspective?
- Does the organization lose money? Does it make money? Most nonprofits aim to spend most of the money they take in. If they lose money, or save a great deal of money, you should ask why.

3) Rank the RFPs in order, with 1 as the top choice. Write an explanation for your order.

4) Submit rankings and explanations to the faculty advisor, at least a few days before the April allocations meeting. The advisor should then send all the rankings to all the

students simultaneously, so that each person can study the responses of all the members and take them into account prior to the meeting.

5) At the allocations meeting, students discuss their decisions and work to form a consensus (see XV. Definitions). You will need to consider:

- Which organizations to fund
- How much money to grant them

It is essential to take into account the impact your money will have on the program. Is your money just a tiny part of a much larger project, or is it the major piece to a small program? How much impact will the money have for the grantee, and for the people it serves?

There are no limits to how many grantees you can fund. You may decide to put all your money in one program, or instead divide the pot among 2 or more worthy recipients.

6) Contact the organizations. Draft two letters, one to the recipient(s), the other to the ones not selected. Give a call in person to the organization(s) granted funds. This will enable you to congratulate them in person, and to maintain a personal connection with them that should continue during the period of the grant program. Have the school cut a check or checks for the grantees, to be sent with the letter.

Include grantmaking results in the final press release (See VI. Public Relations Campaign).

7) With the letter of congratulations, send an evaluation form for the grantee to fill out either at the completion of the proposed project, or at some other agreed upon interval (if the project is long-term or ongoing). See XIV. Evaluation for a draft of this letter.

## **XIII. Collective Allocation**

### Goals:

In addition to the goals of XII. Local Allocation:

- To make an impact upon social problems in Israel
- To work collaboratively with students spread across the RAVSAK network, reaching toward common goals
- To reinforce students' skills in evaluating financial data and making informed, responsible decisions

### Steps:

The collective allocation process is the same as for XII. Local Allocation, with a couple of modifications.

1) School Committees go through Steps 1 through 3 of the Local Allocation process, this time with RFPs and reports of Israeli organizations in hand. After having gone through these steps for local allocation, participants should feel more comfortable in their ability to read RFPs, annual reports and financial statements. Each School Committee arrives at its own ranking of grantees, accompanied by an explanation. Ranking and explanation are written up by the liaison to the Israel Committee and submitted to the RAVSAK program manager several days in advance of the Israel allocation meeting, for distribution to all Israel Committee liaisons.

3) At a conference call, the Israel Committee performs Step 5 together, working with the rankings and explanations developed by the School Committees.

4) The Israel Committee performs Steps 6 and 7. Letters to the grantees are written by the Israel Committee and sent to the RAVSAK office, from where they will go out to grant recipients along with a check.

5) Liaisons report the results of the Israel Committee allocation decision to their school committee. Include these results in the final press release (See VI. Public Relations Campaign).

## XIV. Follow-Up and Evaluation

### Goals:

- To ensure that the programs funded are carried through as planned and evaluated
- To learn the importance of evaluation to the success of any project
- To consider evaluation as part of the fabric of a project, rather than a process exterior to it
- To bring to consciousness the students' achievements during Project ROPE
- To evaluate Project ROPE and improve it for students next year

### Steps:

The awarding of money is only the beginning of the life of the grant. Even though the allocation comes at the end of the program, it's still essential to build evaluation into the fabric of the grantmaking process. Follow-up with your programs will enable you to ensure that the money you've allotted goes to a good cause. Share follow-up reports with the participants in next year's Project ROPE cohort. They will be inspired to see the final "product" that their efforts can achieve. They can also use evaluations of the previous year's grantees to gain insight into their own choices.

1) End of year follow-up. Touch base with the grantees before the end of the school year. Inquire what measures they have taken so far to implement the ROPE grant. Convey your enthusiasm for their project, and tell them you and your colleagues look forward to learning about its progress.

2) Evaluation of the programs funded. Depending upon the length of the grant, make sure to ask grantees to submit a grant evaluation at the end of the period or every few months (if the project is ongoing). These evaluations should be sent to the faculty advisor, who can then forward them electronically or in the mail to participants.

*The grant evaluation form below is adapted from the one found at [http://www.youthgrantmakers.org/SampleDocs\\_menu.html](http://www.youthgrantmakers.org/SampleDocs_menu.html), from the website of the Michigan Community Foundation Youth Project of the Council of Michigan Foundations.*

3) Evaluation of Project ROPE. Create a template of expectations at the beginning of the program (Project ROPE Goals). Revisit the template in the middle of the program, after winter break (Mid-Year Evaluation). The template provides benchmarks for the students to evaluate the success of the program at the end of the year (Final Evaluation).

**IMPORTANT:** Please send one copy of all student evaluations to the program manager at RAVSAK. Advisors are also requested to complete the evaluation forms themselves and to send the final one with those of the students.

Project ROPE Committee  
Grant Evaluation

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Grantee:

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Amount of grant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date grant was authorized: \_\_\_\_\_

Program name: \_\_\_\_\_

Progress report due date: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of grant:

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Special terms of the grant:

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**REPORT OF GRANT ACTIVITIES**

Please answer the questions below. Attach up to one additional page if needed.

1. Specifically, how were the funds from this grant used? Please provide a project budget detailing expenditures.

If the entire grant has not been expended, please explain your plan for the remaining funds.

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2. Please outline the project goals as described in the original proposal. Were the goals met?

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3. Will the program continue? Why or why not? If the program will continue, how will funding be secured for continuation?

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**If applicable and/or available, please enclose photographs of the funded project or program.**

**Mail to:**  
**Project ROPE Committee**  
**[c/o TBD—faculty advisor]**  
**[school name]**  
**[street address]**  
**[city], [state] [zip code]**

**Or submit electronically to \_\_\_\_\_**

## **Project ROPE Goals**

At the beginning of any major undertaking, it is important to have an idea of what the project will achieve, and what you will get out of it. After receiving an introduction to Project ROPE, please fill out this form and keep it with you over the duration of the year. Your answers will give you a basis for understanding what you will accomplish through Project ROPE.

What are the objectives of Project ROPE?

What do you personally hope to get out of Project ROPE?

What do you hope that Project ROPE will achieve?

How will you know if the program has succeeded?

## **Mid-Year Evaluation of Project ROPE**

Look over the Project ROPE goals that you wrote up at the beginning of the year.

Have any of your original goals and expectations already been met? How so?

Based upon your study so far, how would you change or modify any of your answers?  
Explain why.

## **Final Evaluation of Project ROPE**

Your reflection upon Project ROPE will enable you to articulate the kinds of insights, skills and knowledge that you have gained over the course of the year's many activities. Your evaluation is also extremely valuable to us—to all of the people who have worked hard to build the program and carry it through. You will help us to judge its triumphs and failures; your input will enable us to make improvements so that next year the program can offer an even better experience for students in all participating schools.

1) Look again at your answers to the Project ROPE goals. Which goals were met, and which weren't? Please explain why.

2) How effective were your school and advisor in supporting Project ROPE?

3) What impact do you think Project ROPE had on your community? Could it have had a greater impact? If so, how?

4) What suggestions do you have for improving Project ROPE?

## **XV. Definitions**

### **Nonprofit Organization**

- An organization not established for the purpose of producing profits

### **Foundation**

- A nonprofit organization, recognized by the Internal Revenue Service, to enhance the quality of life through grantmaking. Types of foundations include community, corporate, family, and private.

### **Grantmaking**

- The giving of funds for a specific purpose

### **Endowment**

- Funds or property donated to an institution, individual, or group as a source of income

### **Types of Funds**

- Unrestricted – a permanent endowment fund which holds gifts with no designation or preferences given by the donor regarding the distribution of interest
- Field of Interest – a series of permanently endowed funds each holding gifts for a very broad interest area, i.e. arts, education, youth, environment, etc.
- Donor Advised – funds whose income expenditure is directed by the donor or his/her heirs

### **501c3**

- The section of U. S. tax law granting exemption from federal income tax to nonprofit organizations

### **Consensus**

- Consensus is a process for group decision-making. It is a method by which an entire group of people can come to an agreement. The input and ideas of all participants are gathered and synthesized to arrive at a final decision acceptable to all.

There are three essential guidelines for building consensus. Participants

1. Agree to support the decision, though it may not be their first choice
2. Agree to support the decision as if it were their first choice
3. Feel as though they have had sufficient opportunity to influence the decision