



Leadership Development Track

Summary of Main Insights*

Defining the field of Leadership Development

- There are many programs, initiatives, and organizations dedicated to *leadership development* throughout the Jewish world. However, these programs and organizations do not necessarily see themselves as part of an ecosystem working for common goals. Leadership Development in the Jewish World has not yet been defined as a field.
- The term Leadership Development currently serves as an ‘umbrella’ term. In other words, there are different definitions of what leadership development means and what/who it is supposed to serve. Many people understand the words “leadership” and “development” to mean very different things.
- One of the key questions we are asking in this conversation is: *What would it look like if the organizations focused on leadership development represented in this room (and those that are not in this room) started to see themselves as a system?*
- For the sake of our discussions, we will use the following working definition: **the field of Leadership Development refers to organizations and activities dedicated to increasing, developing, nurturing, and empowering, Leaders who are devoted to strengthening Jewish Peoplehood and dealing with the current challenges facing World Jewry.**

The Gap: What are the main challenges in the field of Leadership Development:

- The Koret Center – represented by Naama Klar – put forward a draft diagnosis of the relevancy gap that currently exists in the field of Leadership Development (see below).



- The main challenge that was introduced is that: *Not enough people are trained, together, in the right way, to face the current and future challenges of the Jewish people.*

Refining the gap – Key comments and questions from participants included:

- The main question that Leadership Development programs need to be asking is: **To what ends?** What are we training leaders for?
- There is currently no collective frame around the **global** field of leadership development. Can we/should we even be aspiring to a global leadership development field?
- Local-Global tension - What is the relationship between the local context and the global aspiration?
- Not everyone has the privilege to participate (time, money), how should Leadership Development organizations address these populations?
- What's Jewish about Jewish leadership development? Are we trying to solve Jewish problems, or are we trying to solve problems Jewishly?
- Is leadership development the how or the what? Many Leadership development programs/organizations see themselves as if they are the end and not the means.
- Lack of diversity: A significant portion of Jewish leadership (and by default, participants in leadership programs) do not reflect the diversity that the Jewish people aspire to encompass. This trend is only becoming more apparent due to rising polarization and the erosion of shared Jewish spaces.
- Elite programs are only part of the puzzle, other people on the ground need to be trained for different purposes and building other capacities. These other programs currently don't appear in the frame.
- Because every foundation desires their own leadership program, collaboration and diversity in leadership programs are stunted. The current funding structure of current leadership programs contributes to the above identified gaps in the leadership field by creating unnecessary competition and scarcity.

The Vision: What is an aspired vision for the field of Leadership Development?

Participants brainstormed what is the aspired vision for the field of Leadership Development, below is a summary of the main points raised:

We aspire for a Leadership Development field that is:

- **Focused on the Ends** (not the means) – i.e. - on grooming proud leaders who are active in articulating the greatest challenges facing the Jewish people [and the world], and are active in making progress on those challenges.
- **Diverse** – in participants and perspectives. A field that grooms leaders who are representative of the public that they serve.
- **Collaborative** – a field that is strategic and collaborative between organizations and programs. That sees leadership development as a continuum and creates “hand offs” between programs.

- Addresses the **Long Tail of Leadership** – i.e. – on creating multiple gateways to leadership development experiences and grooming people who go beyond the top 1% of organizations.
- **Prioritizes teaching Jewish knowledge and values.**
- Focuses on fostering a **sense of belonging to the Jewish people** in its participants.
- **A learning field** – that has built in mechanisms for assessing and renewing itself.
- **Leave room for unexpected leadership**, and incentivize neutral leadership that flourishes naturally within the Jewish people.
- Aspires to groom leaders who revere the value of *chesbon nefesh* (self critique).
- Leaders who are **motivated** not from fear, but from an **aspired vision** for the future.

The Response: What can be done to close the gap between the reality and the aspired vision? (Projects, initiatives, conversations)

Participants brainstormed initiatives that could address the challenges and the gap, as defined in the previous section. Below is a list of some of those recommendations:

- **Commission new and more sophisticated data/research/mapping of the field**– There is currently a lack of knowledge and shared comprehension as to what is even happening in the field. What are the programs? what are their purposes? Who are the participants? In this realm, recommendations included commissioning studies to gather more information about what is currently taking place and using sophisticated AI systems to compile ‘smart’ analysis and recommendations based on that data.
- **Foster active collaboration between programs and organizations:** Incentivize collaboration between programs, in particular recommendations included creating a **continuum of programs** – where one program works actively to ‘hand off’ participants to other programs.
- **Prioritize inclusion and diversity of participants:** To achieve this, recommendations included: (1) Nameless application process (2) lottery for selecting participants (3) Commission research to understand which groups are systematically being left out (4) using AI for the selection process.
- **Search for and incentivize new business models for the field:** A main concern raised was that the current funding model perpetuates the current structure (which includes competition, working in silos, etc). As such, new business models are needed in order to create a structural shift in the field. Recommendations included: looking at the system of Chabad Shlichim, studying best practices from the world, and leaning on alumni for significant financing of future cohorts.
- **Convene a "Fundors consortium" to think systemically about the field: as noted, within the current system, funders have the ability to create structural change by working together to identify opportunities in the field and incentivize collaboration and innovation.**

- **Foster the Long Tail of Leadership** – In order to reach the ‘long tail of leadership’ – those who go beyond the top 1% (ex: number 2s and 3s in organizations) – it is important to actively reach out and make programs accessible to those populations. Recommendations included: creating more entry points, less difficult screening processes, actively targeting and seeking out these populations, starting young.
- **Develop the *Mifgash* as a key methodology for leadership development:** in order to foster a sense of Jewish Peoplehood amongst participants, foster sophisticated *mifgash* models as a key modality in these programs.
- **Establish a platform/forum for sharing resources and best practices:** In order to build the field, create a shared platform for people working in the field to share resources, best practices, challenges, and opportunities.
- **Develop Train the Trainers programs:** There is currently a lack of specific and relevant professional development opportunities for those who are specializing in the field of leadership development. Recommendations included developing Train the Trainers cohorts and actively targeting participants from a multitude of organizations in order to break down silos and encourage collaboration.

* This document is a summary of key insights and recommendations from a conversation held among 18 Jewish professionals at a track dedicated to Leadership Development at the 2023 Koret Ideation Gathering. The content of the document does not represent the group as a whole.