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Natan announces new Grant Committee focused on the Russian-Speaking Jewish Community

New York - The Natan Fund, a giving circle of young philanthropists in New York funding Jewish and Israeli social innovation around the world, has announced the creation of a groundbreaking new grant committee devoted to supporting innovative initiatives to strengthen the Jewish identity of Russian-Speaking Jews (RSJ) in North America.

The new RSJ Committee consists of 14 individuals and couples who joined Natan this fall. Several of the new members are recent graduates of the Wexner Foundation's first Wexner Heritage RSJ class. With the Genesis Philanthropy Group matching a portion of the new RSJ Natan members' contributions, the committee will award around \$150,000 in grants in 2015.

"It's vital that young Russian-speaking Jews begin to assume more philanthropic leadership roles," said Jane Greyf, a co-chair of the new committee. "Joining a giving circle like Natan is a hands-on way for me and my peers to experience strategic philanthropy – and to learn about and engage with exciting initiatives that are transforming the lives of Russian-speaking Jews."

Felicia Herman, Natan's executive director, added, "As far as we know, this is the first 'giving circle' of RSJ philanthropists who have come together to support RSJ initiatives – and we hope it's just the first of many. We're tremendously excited to expand the Natan network with so many wonderful new people who are taking a proactive approach to their philanthropy, and we're delighted to have a new grant committee dedicated to investing in the many innovative new initiatives emerging in RSJ communities around North America."

The new RSJ grant committee is launching its first [RSJ Grant Opportunity](#). Applications are due January 5, 2015. Grants will support initiatives that are using innovative approaches to build Jewish community and strengthen Jewish life among Russian-speaking Jews in North America, especially for those who are not currently engaged in Jewish communal life.

"The development of philanthropy in the RSJ community in North America is crucially important and this venture is a wonderful example of this process," said

Marina Yudborovsky, Regional Director of Genesis Philanthropy in North America. “We are sure this circle will not only make a significant impact on the organizations working with the Russian Jewish community, but will also encourage the development of new initiatives and innovative approaches in this space.”

About Natan

The Natan Fund inspires young philanthropists to become actively engaged in Jewish giving by funding innovative projects that are shaping the Jewish future. Natan members pool their funds and bear the risks involved with supporting new and/or undiscovered ideas. They engage in a group educational process in order to fund innovative, creative, and socially meaningful projects, and they make all of Natan’s grant decisions collectively.

About Genesis Philanthropy Group

Genesis Philanthropy Group is a private foundation whose mission is to develop and enhance a sense of Jewish identity among Russian-speaking Jews worldwide by supporting and launching projects, programming and institutions that are focused on ensuring that Jewish culture, heritage and values are preserved in Russian-speaking Jewish communities. More information is available at www.gpg.org.

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