



natan

**Natan 2015-2016  
Request for Proposals  
Grants for Initiatives for Russian-Speaking Jews (RSJ)**

**About Natan**

The Natan Fund<sup>\*</sup> 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.

**RSJ Grants**

Natan's Grants for Initiatives for Russian-Speaking Jews 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. Natan also seeks to empower new leadership in the RSJ community by supporting initiatives that encourage participants to become active agents of change within their own communities.

Organizations supported through this grant program might include:

- innovative platforms that explore the many facets of Jewish civilization, ritual, and life cycles in contemporary ways, especially new ways of integrating Jewish wisdom, traditions and experience with "secular" endeavors (e.g. arts and culture, environment and food, inclusion of marginalized populations, new technologies, etc.);
- new educational platforms and community-building efforts that aim to transmit Jewish wisdom, knowledge, and/or values, especially to those not currently engaged in Jewish life;
- platforms that build and create connections between Jews across geographic, ethnic, denominational, and/or ideological borders, or within specific demographic/age ranges and across generations

**Natan's Focus**

In the spirit of "venture philanthropy," Natan is especially interested in supporting startups and fledgling organizations that have not yet received significant support from major funders and that are independent from larger institutions and organizational structures. Natan seeks to catalyze and support innovation that begins on the margins of the Jewish organizational world; thus local affiliates of national organizations and organizations with strong brands and/or long track records in the Jewish communal world are unlikely to be funded. Ideal grantees will also take a pluralist, "big

---

<sup>\*</sup> *The Natan Fund is named in memory of JJ Greenberg (1965-2002), a Jewish communal leader and a friend to many of Natan's founding members. "Natan" is derived from the verb "to give" in Hebrew.*

tent” approach to Jewish life, welcoming diverse viewpoints and traditionally marginalized populations.

Natan is also seeking to support organizations that are focused as much on developing adaptable and replicable new models as they are on their own organizational needs, with the goal of generating systemic change for the Jewish people. While Natan will support initiatives with a local focus, such initiatives should manifest a unique approach that could be replicated in other communities, a vision for broad scale change, exceptional leadership, and/or a desire to scale up beyond the local community in the near future.

Please also be advised that, while Natan has funded arts and culture projects in the past, our focus is in utilizing arts and culture as an instrument for strengthening Jewish identity, and not on funding artistic endeavors in and of themselves. Before applying for a grant to support an arts or cultural project, make sure that you are able to discuss your educational and identity-building goals for the project in detail, and that (especially if your project is a film or other cultural product) your project is 100% not-for-profit.

### **Eligibility**

Natan invites applications for its 2015-2016 RSJ grants from North America-based organizations with **annual operating budgets of \$1.5 million or less**. Applicants must be recognized as a tax-exempt organization under the appropriate sections of the United States or Canadian tax code or have a fiscal sponsor with such standing.

Organizations may apply for one-year grants of up to US\$50,000, though most grant awards are in the \$10,000 - \$40,000 range. Grant recipients have the opportunity to apply for renewals beyond the initial year of funding, and most Natan grants are renewed for at least three years. Multi-year grants, however, cannot be considered.

This grant program will not support scholarships or grants to individuals.

The grant year for Natan’s RSJ Grants is July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016. The first payment (for 2/3 of the total grant award) will be made upon receipt of a signed grant agreement, and the last payment (for the remaining 1/3 of the grant award) will be made upon review of a final report. Grantees will also be required to submit a mid-year report halfway through the grant year.

### **Application Information**

Applications must be submitted through the Common Grant Application form on the web platform for [Amplifier: The Jewish Giving Circle Movement](#).

Amplifier is a global network of giving circles like Natan that are motivated by Jewish values and inspired by changemakers who are making a difference around the world. Amplifier catalyzes, connects and counsels giving circles through hands-on guidance and a growing suite of tools, including a Common Grant Application that allows organizations to submit a single application that is viewable by any registered Amplifier giving circle.

Submitting an application through the Amplifier web platform exponentially increases opportunities for giving circles to discover potential grant recipients. By submitting a Common Grant Application for the Natan RSJ grants, organizations will be applying for this Natan grant opportunity; become part of Amplifier’s Common Grant Application system, allowing other giving circles registered on the Amplifier platform to find and fund their work; and automatically create a profile in Amplifier’s

publicly-accessible Organization Directory, further spreading the word to anyone who visits the Amplifier web platform.

All applicants need to create a new account on the Amplifier platform, even if they have applied to Natan in the past.

### **How to Apply:**

1. Go to [www.amplifiergiving.org](http://www.amplifiergiving.org)
2. In the upper right hand corner of the website click “Join Amplifier”
3. Create your organization organization/initiative profile, which includes filling out the common grant application
4. Click “opportunity” on the top of the screen and select “Grants for Initiatives for Russian-Speaking Jews 2015-2016”
5. Click “view details” of the opportunity you would like to apply for
6. Click “apply for opportunity”
7. Fill out the application including any custom questions
9. Click “apply” and wait for confirmation that your application has been submitted

Please do not send hard copies of any materials, including CDs or DVDs, unless Natan requests such materials.

### **Timeline**

- 1) Applications must be received by **5pm ET on Monday, January 5, 2015**.
- 2) Natan will choose finalists by **February 27, 2015**. Finalists will be invited to make a presentation to Natan’s RSJ Grants Committee by video or in person in **March/April 2015**.
- 3) Final decisions will be announced by **June 1, 2015**.

\* \* \*

The new RSJ Committee consists of 14 individuals and couples who joined Natan this fall. 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.

All questions about Natan’s RSJ Grants should be directed to Jackie Fishman, Assistant Director, at [jackie@natan.org](mailto:jackie@natan.org).