Friends of Interfaith Encounter Association Inc

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EIN: 20-4018144
Report Generated on: 12/26/2023

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Friends of Interfaith Encounter Association Inc

Springfield, VA
https://interfaith-encounter.org/en/

MISSION

The Interfaith Encounter Association is dedicated to promoting real coexistence and human peace in the Holy Land and the Middle East through cross-cultural study and inter-religious dialogue. We believe that, rather than being the cause of the problem; religion can and should be a source of solution for conflicts that exist in the region and beyond. We do not believe in the blending of all traditions into one undifferentiated group, but in providing a table where all can come and sit in safety and ease, while being fully who they are in their respective religions.

EIN
20-4018144

RULING YEAR
2007

IRS SUBSECTION
501(c)(3) Public Charity

FOUNDING YEAR
2001

MAIN ADDRESS
6949 Conservation Dr.
Springfield, VA 22153

AFFILIATION TYPE
Independent Organization

CONTACT
Yehuda Stolov
yehuda@interfaith-encounter.org

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Yehuda Stolov

BOARD CHAIR
Bob Carroll

SUBJECT AREA
Community and economic development
Human services
Youth development
International peace and security

NTEE Code
Human Service Organizations (P20)
PROGRAMS

1. Groups of Interfaith Encounter
   Population(s) served: Age groups, Ethnic and racial groups, Religious groups, Social and economic status

POPULATIONS SERVED

1. Age groups
2. Ethnic and racial groups
3. Religious groups
4. Social and economic status

COMPLIANCE

✓ IRS Pub 78 Verified as of December 2023
✓ IRS BMF 509(a) (1) as of December 11, 2023
Section 509(a)(1) organization as referred to in Section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)

TRANSPARENCY MEASURES

✗ Board Practices Reported?
✓ Diversity Data Reported?
Programs & Results

PROGRAMS
Source: Self-Reported by Organization, March 2023

Groups of Interfaith Encounter

Population(s) Served: n/a

We run dozens of Interfaith Encounter group across the Holy Land and a few in other countries.

Interfaith encounter is a meaningful conversation: participants exchange ideas on existentially significant issues, and get to know one another in an intimate way. It reveals similarities and helps build bridges between people. It also enables to share differences in a constructive, respectful way, and encourages participants to develop friendships with those they disagree with.

Through its transformative power, people abandon prejudices and stereotypes they hold of each other, replacing them with direct and real understanding that leads to respect, trust and friendship.

Even one encounter creates important transformation. But when groups meet regularly, this provides a regular opportunity for encounter, exemplifies possibility of inter-communal relations based on friendship and respect for each unique identity, and constantly generates change as new members of the larger communities join.
RESULTS

Total number of conferences held

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Number of Conferences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>420</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>385</td>
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<td>2020</td>
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<td>2019</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>414</td>
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Population(s) Served: No target populations selected

Related program:

Number of groups brought together in a coalition/alliance/partnership

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>2020</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>44</td>
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Population(s) Served: No target populations selected

Related program:

Number of free participants in conferences

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>3,999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Population(s) Served: No target populations selected

Related program:
CHARTING IMPACT

What is the organization aiming to accomplish?

We live relatively near to one another, and perhaps even shop or work in the same places, but we know so little about one another, which leads to image of each other that is composed mostly of prejudices and negative stereotypes. Recent history has taught us that when different communities live close by and physical interaction between them is easy, the quality of their intercommunal relations depends more on their being good neighbors than on agreements between their respective leaderships. Therefore, the process of building peace in the Holy Land (and often elsewhere) must include a strong emphasis on grassroots inter-communal relations if it is to be successful and sustainable.

When we analyze the disapproving attitudes that many in our communities have for each other we realize that these are not the result of an educated decision that it is impossible to live together. On the contrary: negative attitudes result from the generalization of individual cases of negativity, which creates prejudices and off-putting stereotypes that result in a negative image of the 'other'. The problem with such images is that they are psychologically rooted and it is not enough to explain the actual reality to counteract them. In order to uproot them we need an experience that will be psychologically significant. The interfaith encounter in which participants truly and deeply meet the 'other' face-to-face, provides such an experience and can be profoundly transformative. Consequently, interfaith encounter is not only relevant for those who enjoy interfaith dialogue or learning for their own sake. Interfaith encounters are important for any person who lives in a split society, as it gives ordinary people an avenue to make an actual contribution towards real peace – directly, without being dependent on their leaders. Knowing and understanding the 'other' directly, in turn, alleviates the fear from all members of their community and thus improves the quality of life for participants.

What are the organization's key strategies for making this happen?

Interfaith encounter is fundamentally educational and social – meeting neighbors and friends, learning about different religions and lifestyles, and through that education breaking stereotypes, prejudices and misperceptions. In this way, interfaith encounter makes a real contribution to the improvement of the life quality of its participants and to the building of peaceful relations between their communities.

Interfaith encounter focuses on themes that relate to the foundation of the respective cultures and touches on issues that have deep existential meaning for the participants, even for the most secular among them. Discussing together how one relates to religion/culture and religious/cultural texts and ideas allows us to address core issues of identity and meaning and to find shared values. The discussion becomes much more intimate than just an exchange of opinions and gives room for the exposure of the humanity of the 'other', which happens when people really look into each other's eyes. Moreover, this focus reveals large degrees of similarities between participants' traditions. This idea of discovering shared values may sound pedestrian but can be a tremendous revelation for participants. Finally, this angle allows for a constructive way to discuss differences. In this way participants train themselves to develop friendships with people they disagree with, which is the real challenge we face.

Even one encounter creates an important transformation among its participants. But when groups from neighboring communities meet regularly, this provides a regular opportunity for encounter, exemplifies the possibility of inter-communal relations based on friendship and respect for the unique identity of each, and constantly generates change as additional members of the larger communities join. In this way, the transformation becomes much more solid and effective.

What are the organization's capabilities for doing this?

The Interfaith Encounter Association works since 2001 to promote genuine coexistence and sustainable peace, through joint community building on the grassroots level, using interactive interfaith dialogue as its vehicle.

In its twenty years of existence, the IEA has held more than 4,000 programs, with many thousands of participants. A most significant fact is that the participants in IEA programs include people of all political and religious views, as well as all ages, genders, walks of life etc.; and that the vast majority of them have met the 'other' for the first time through IEA. As of this date the IEA has founded 116 ongoing community groups of interfaith encounter – from the Upper Galilee to Eilat, including 38 groups that bring together on a regular basis Israelis and West Bank Palestinians.
Our theory of change fits the extended contact theory that Thomas Pettigrew introduced in the 1990s, as an improvement of the theory Gordon Allport suggested in the 1950s. Our approach meets the conditions Pettigrew portrayed for successful contact process, namely: an ongoing encounter that develops close relations, equality within the group, building cooperation towards the common goal of peaceful inter-communal relations, and active learning about each other.

Our approach differs from most peacebuilding approaches in its strong emphasis on the grassroots inter-communal relations and in its true inclusiveness. It refrains from supporting a specific political model and instead invites supporters of all models to work together on the human infrastructure that is required for their success. This inevitably has a huge impact on their political beliefs as well, because while participants usually retain their existing political views, they seek ways to apply them in ways that care for, and honor the humanity of, the other.

By initially restricting political arguments, we ensure that when divisive issues do come up, as they inevitably will, they are discussed in a non-threatening way and in a way which doesn’t damage the group’s process. By the time they are discussed, the discussion is between friends who trust each other and know how much they share. When you disagree with a friend, you do so in a way which is dramatically different than with someone you see as an enemy.

Our approach also differs from other interfaith efforts because its focus on interactive conversations between participants, rather than passive listening to expert speakers.

The effectiveness of the IEA approach is supported by a series of academic research works conducted by Bar Ilan, De Paul and Berkley Universities.

What have and haven't they accomplished so far?

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In 2021, despite challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, we ran 33 groups, who met 385 times, with some 3,000 participants.
Operations

Source: Self-Reported by Organization, March 2023

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Yehuda A. Stolov Ph.D.

YEHUDA STOLOV is the executive director of the Interfaith Encounter Association.
Dr. Stolov has lectured on the role of religious dialogue in peace-building throughout the world, including Jordan, India, Indonesia, Turkey, South Korea, North America and Europe. He also published many papers on related issues. In 2006, he was awarded the Immortal Chaplains Foundation Prize for Humanity, which honors those who “risked all to protect others of a different faith or ethnic origin”; and in 2015 he was awarded the IIE Victor J. Goldberg Prize for Peace in the Middle East.
Among other activities, Dr. Stolov was a member of the International Council of the International Association for Religious Freedom and a member of the steering committee for the United Nations Decade of Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace.
He holds a B.Sc. and a M.Sc. in Physics and a Ph.D. from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is married and father of three children, living in Jerusalem.

BOARD CHAIR

Bob Carroll

BOARD MEMBERS

Ibrahim Mustafa
Jared Goldfarb
Moatasem Hassuneh
Albert Groothedde
## STAFF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Type</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Staff</td>
<td>Carolina Frimer</td>
<td>Community Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BOARD LEADERSHIP PRACTICES
GuideStar worked with BoardSource, the national leader in nonprofit board leadership and governance, to create this section, which enables organizations and donors to transparently share information about essential board leadership practices.

BOARD ORIENTATION & EDUCATION
Does the board conduct a formal orientation for new board members and require all board members to sign a written agreement regarding their roles, responsibilities, and expectations?
Not Applicable

CEO OVERSIGHT
Has the board conducted a formal, written assessment of the chief executive within the past year?
Not Applicable

ETHICS & TRANSPARENCY
Have the board and senior staff reviewed the conflict-of-interest policy and completed and signed disclosure statements in the past year?
Not Applicable

BOARD COMPOSITION
Does the board ensure an inclusive board member recruitment process that results in diversity of thought and leadership?
Yes

BOARD PERFORMANCE
Has the board conducted a formal, written self-assessment of its performance within the past three years?
Not Applicable
Organizational Demographics

Who works and leads organizations that serve our diverse communities? This organization has voluntarily shared information to answer this important question and to support sector-wide learning. GuideStar partnered on this section with CHANGE Philanthropy and Equity in the Center.

Leadership

The organization’s leader identifies as:

Race & Ethnicity: Middle Eastern/North African
Gender Identity: Male
Sexual Orientation: Decline to state
Disability Status: Decline to state

Race & Ethnicity

Board Members: 5
Staff: 2
Senior Staff: 2

- Asian/Asian American: 0%
- Black/African American: 0%
- Hispanic/Latino/Latinx: 0%
- Middle Eastern/North African: 40%
- Native American/African Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous: 0%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0%
- White/Caucasian/European: 0%
- Multi-Racial/Multi-Ethnic (2+ races/ethnicities): 0%
- People who prefer to identify with another race or ethnicity: 0%
- Unknown or decline to state: 50%

Gender Identity

Staff: 2
Senior Staff: 2

- Female: 60%
- Male: 50%
- Non-binary: 0%
- Unknown or decline to state: 0%

Sexual Orientation

No data

Disability

No data.

We do not display staff or senior staff disability information for organizations with fewer than 15 staff.
Equity Strategies  Last Updated: 01/19/2022

Candid partnered with Equity in the Center - a project that works to shift mindsets, practices, and systems within the social sector to increase racial equity - to create this section. Learn More

Data

✓ We disaggregate data to adjust programming goals to keep pace with changing needs of the communities we support.

✓ We employ non-traditional ways of gathering feedback on programs and trainings, which may include interviews, roundtables, and external reviews with/by community stakeholders.

✓ We have long-term strategic plans and measurable goals for creating a culture such that one's race identity has no influence on how they fare within the organization.

Policies and processes

✓ We seek individuals from various race backgrounds for board and executive director/CEO positions within our organization.

✓ We have community representation at the board level, either on the board itself or through a community advisory board.

✓ We help senior leadership understand how to be inclusive leaders with learning approaches that emphasize reflection, iteration, and adaptability.

✓ We engage everyone, from the board to staff levels of the organization, in race equity work and ensure that individuals understand their roles in creating culture such that one's race identity has no influence on how they fare within the organization.
## Appendix

### Key Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Document(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRS Forms 990</td>
<td>2008 990</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRS Forms 990T</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audited Financial Statements</td>
<td>2021 Audited Financial Statement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2020 Audited Financial Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Organization Documents</td>
<td>Letter of Determination</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2021 Annual Report</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2020 Annual Report</td>
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**Friends of Interfaith Encounter Association Inc**

6949 Conservation Dr.
Springfield, VA 22153

- **Foundation Status Code:** PC*
- **Public charity described in section 509(a)(1) or (2)**

### IRS Publication 78 Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Most recent IRS Publication 78</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends of Interfaith Encounter Association Inc</td>
<td>Springfield, VA</td>
<td>December 2023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Deductibility status description

A public charity (50% deductibility limitation).

Verified with most recent Internal Revenue Bulletin

December 18, 2023

### IRS Business Master File Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization name</th>
<th>Most recent IRS BMF</th>
<th>Reason for Non-Private Foundation Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRIENDS OF INTERFAITH ENCOUNTER ASSOCIATION INC</td>
<td>December 11 2023</td>
<td>Section 509(a)(1) organization as referred to in Section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EIN</th>
<th>IRS subsection</th>
<th>Ruling date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-4018144</td>
<td>This organization is a 501(c)(3) Public Charity</td>
<td>09/2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This organization was not included in the Office of Foreign Assets Control Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) list.

On September 8, 2011, the IRS issued regulations which eliminated the advance ruling process for a section 501(c)(3) organization. Learn more

* The Foundation Status Code is the code that foundations are required to provide for each grantee annually on part XV of Form 990PF. Note that this code cannot be derived in some cases (e.g., supporting organizations for which ‘type’ can’t be determined).

IRS Revenue Procedure 2011-33 allows grantors to rely on third-party resources, such as GuideStar Charity Check, to obtain required Business Master File (BMF) data concerning a potential grantee’s public charity classification under section 509 (a) (1), (2) or (3).

### GuideStar Charity Check Data Sources

- GuideStar acquires all IRS data directly from the Internal Revenue Service.

- **IRS Publication 78 (Cumulative List of Organizations)** lists organizations that have been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions.

- **IRS Internal Revenue Bulletin (IRB)** lists changes in charitable status since the last Publication 78 release. Between the release of IRS Publication 78 and the subsequent IRS Internal Revenue Bulletin, the IRB date will reflect the most recent release date of IRS Publication 78.

- **IRS Business Master File** lists approximately 1.7 million nonprofits registered with the IRS as tax-exempt organizations.

- The [IRS Automatic Revocation of Exemption List](https://www.irs.gov) contains organizations that have had their federal tax-exempt status automatically revoked for failing to file an annual return or notice with the IRS for three consecutive years.

- The Foundation Status Code is a value derived by mapping the codes found on the 990PF filing instructions to the corresponding codes in the IRS BMF. Note that not all codes are able to be mapped due to insufficient data.

- The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) list contains organizations that are owned or controlled by targeted individuals, groups, and entities, such as terrorists or narcotics traffickers. Their assets are blocked and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from dealing with them.

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