

# Back to Life: How a Team of Library Fundraisers Turned Rejection into Gifts

By Joyce Garczynski & Suzanna Yaukey

**TU** TOWSON  
UNIVERSITY | ALBERT S. COOK  
LIBRARY



# A Little Poll to Get Us Started...

Scan the QR Code with your phone  
or visit

<https://tinyurl.com/ALADN26TU>

and answer the questions.



## ALADN "Back to Life" Opening Poll





0 response submitted

## Have you ever obsessed about a gift or grant you didn't get?

Scan the QR or  
use link to join



[https://  
forms.cloud.micro-  
soft/r/1FTftJs8h](https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/1FTftJs8h)

 Copy link

Yes

No

Maybe, but I'd never tell

Treemap

Bar



1 of 2



# About Us



**Joyce  
Garczynski**

**Director of  
Library  
Communication  
& Engagement**

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**Suzanna  
Yaukey**

**Dean of  
University  
Libraries**

[syaukey@towson.edu](mailto:syaukey@towson.edu)

- Towson University is the largest primarily undergrad institution in the Baltimore region with 19,000 students
- In FY 25, Towson University raised 64,000,000 in grants, gifts, and contracts
- Albert S. Cook Library is the only campus library with 56 employees
- The library is raising increasingly more in grant funding and in donations

# Sometimes it's not the right time...

- 1950s: Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR) Books distributed
  - Books confiscated by the Nazis and heirless items distributed to Jewish Institutes around the world
  - Most without a book plate or cataloged as JCR books
- 2009: TU acquired JCR books when we subsumed Baltimore Hebrew University
- 2011: Learned about White Gloves Sessions at ALADN
  - Jewish Studies librarian and Head of Archives developed a JCR White Gloves presentation for area schools
- 2017: Get local \$10k grant to bring Forget-Me Not Holocaust exhibit panels to US
- 2018: Began trying to form partnerships to apply for a grant for a joint JCR catalog



# No, COVID, and a Pivot

- 2018: We found a list and approached lots of institutions. They mostly said it is a nice idea, but we don't have the resources or the interest
- 2020: COVID pause of JCR White Gloves and partnerships
- 2020: Suzanna arrives at TU and helps us build grant infrastructure
- 2022: \$22k grant from TU Foundation to hold a virtual Holocaust education summit
  - 200+ participants from 8 countries

*of Jewish Library  
Delran 1958*

JEWISH CULTURAL RECONSTRUCTION  
DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS IN THE U.S. FROM JULY 1, 1949 TO JAN. 31, 1952

Name of Institution	No. of Items Received <sup>a</sup>	No. Returned	Net Received	Rare Books Included <sup>c</sup>
<b>A. Priority Libraries</b>				
American Jewish Historical Society, N.Y.	358		358	
Baltimore Hebrew College, Baltimore	4,554 <sup>b</sup>		4,552	132
Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass.	11,268 <sup>c</sup>	2	11,268	28
College of Jewish Studies, Chicago	7,521		7,521	117
Dropsie College, Philadelphia	6,700 <sup>d</sup>	1,151	5,549	255
Hebrew Teachers College, Boston	7,275 <sup>e</sup>		7,275	98
Hebrew Theological College, Chicago	5,945	99	5,847	99
Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati	9,820 <sup>f</sup>	67	9,753	268
Jewish Community Library, Los Angeles	1,061		1,061	
Jewish Institute of Religion, N.Y.	10,661	1,281	9,380	305
Jewish Theological Seminary, N.Y.	13,320	45	13,275	326
Mesifita Rabbi Chaim Berlin, Brooklyn	1,282		1,282	
Mesifita Torah Vodaath, Brooklyn	3,713 <sup>g</sup>		3,713	
Ner Israel, Baltimore	4,689		4,689	101
Rabbinical College of Telah, Cleveland	196		196	
Yeshiva University, N.Y.	10,564 <sup>h</sup>	1,157	9,407	218
Yiddish Scientific Institute, N.Y.	12,360 <sup>j</sup>	679	11,681	64
<b>B. Smaller Libraries</b>				
E'dai Brith Hillel Foundation	1,073	448	625	10
Beth Medrash Elyon, Spring Valley, N.Y.	350 <sup>k</sup>		350	
Beth Medrash Govoha, Lakewood, N.J.	536		536	18
Ezeriah, N.Y.	1,014		1,014	9
Jewish Education Committee, N.Y.	37		37	
Jewish Teachers Seminary, N.Y.	1,062	35	1,027	
Jewish Welfare Board, N.Y.	236		236	36
Mirror Yeshiva, N.Y.	410		410	10
Rabbi Schneersohn Library, Brooklyn	3,294		3,294	19
Yeshiva of Flatbush, Brooklyn	465		465	
Zionist Archives, N.Y.	2,587		2,587	
<b>C. One Time Allocations</b>				
Hebrew Convalescent Home, N.Y.	182		182	
Hebrew Institute of Long Island	63 <sup>l</sup>		63	
Jewish Sanitarium & Hospital for Chronic Diseases, Brooklyn	100		100	
Jewish Settlement House, N.Y.	47		47	
New York Board of Rabbis	22		22	
Wall Street Synagogue, N.Y.	52		52	
Yeshivoth (through Torah Umesorah)	12,013		12,013	
Scholarly Organizations	5,318		5,318	

# Revisiting and finding collaborators

- Suzanna had a connection with the supervisor of a team of librarians at Brandeis who had previously rejected the partnership
- This breathed new life into the project
  - We could collaboratively answer their questions
  - Suzanna had a proven grant track record
- This helped connect us with other partners and gave the project legitimacy



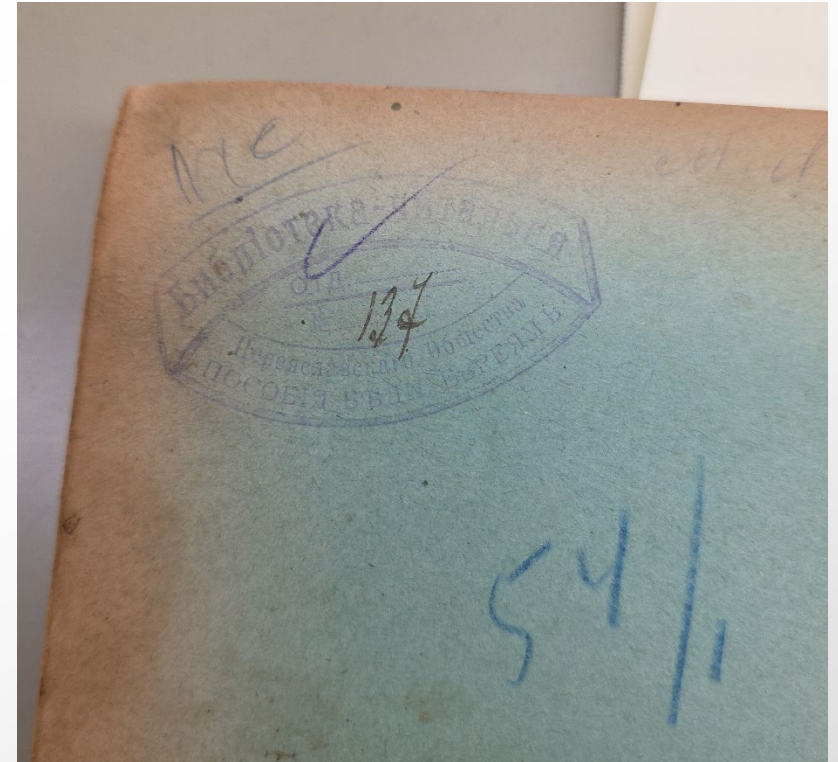
# Two rounds of NEH submissions

- 2021 & 2022: Applied for a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Humanities Collections grant for \$60k
- We thought we could take the feedback from 2021 and draft a stronger proposal in 2022
- 2022 reviewer ratings and comments were contradictory and indicated they didn't understand the project
  - "This work is obviously important and timely."
  - "As it stands, I am confused about why this project matters."
- There has got to be a better way!



# We still want to do this project...

- Geannine Callaghan (Head of Foundation relations for University Advancement) wanted to shop around our project
- Initially took it locally in Maryland but didn't have interest
- Jewish donors on west coast wanted to learn more
  - The OSHER foundation who had funded other university projects connected us with other donors
- Geannine asked me to a Zoom meeting with interested funders. She told me ahead of the call:
  - Since you are intimately familiar with the project, I do not think there is anything to prepare. After introductions I will ask you to share about the project and timeline. Answer any questions to the best of your ability. It is always fine to respond, "I do not know but I will find out."
- In that call, I tried to let my passion for the project come through, especially when talking about the hidden nature of the books, repatriation, and the timeline.



# Getting the pitch just right

- 2 business days after the Zoom call, I had a draft one-pager
- I went back and forth with Geannine and our Office of Sponsored Programs on the text and details
- The one-pager:
  1. Opened with a paragraph explaining the background
  2. Talked about the problem we wanted to solve
  3. Described how our project would solve the problem
  4. Created a sense of urgency and larger purpose
  5. Budget
- We ended up raising more money from multiple foundations than we would have gotten from NEH (plus no indirect costs 😊)

During World War II, the Nazis planned a cultural holocaust to accompany the physical destruction of European Jews. Millions of pieces of European Jewish Cultural heritage were seized by German soldiers, and as Allied forces moved across Europe at the end of the war, they discovered massive storehouses of books, periodicals, and ritual objects. Much of this material passed through the Offenbach Archival Depot, a clearinghouse established by the U. S. Army to identify and restore these cultural artifacts to their rightful homes. However, because of the enormous loss of life and lack of marks of ownership, half a million items remained without heirs. The Jewish Cultural Reconstruction (JCR), Inc., an organization founded in 1947 to collect and distribute Jewish Property after the war, used a distribution formula based on the locations of established Jewish communities around the world to find new homes for these items. It is estimated that JCR distributed approximately 160,000 of these books and periodicals to 48 universities, libraries, and synagogues across the United States in the early 1950s.

What happened to the JCR books after they arrived in the United States depends very much upon their new homes. Some institutions, such as Baltimore Hebrew College (now Baltimore Hebrew Institute at Towson University) inserted the book plates that JCR provided into the approximately 4,500 items they received but did not note the books' JCR status in their catalogs. A few other institutions followed similar practices, but many did not. Conversations with other institutions who received larger collections of JCR books, such as Brandeis University, uncovered that they did not place the JCR book plates in their books, and most did not catalog their books as having been part of the JCR program.

Ultimately the lack of book plates and the lack of catalog records means that these JCR books, these books that are the last remains of some individual lives, these books that witnessed and bear the scars of one of the worst atrocities in history, are hidden away within libraries across the United States. Over the last 10 years, staff at Towson University's Albert S. Cook Library have developed best practices for identifying, cataloging, and sharing their JCR collections in order to make them more accessible. We are seeking funding for a two-year project to codify, test, and share our best practices for saving these books. We want to develop and test a toolkit that institutions with JCR books can use to identify, catalog, and digitize critical pieces of the JCR books in their collections. The creation and testing of this toolkit are significant and necessary first steps in our goal to reunite these books in a shared catalog, whether as additional records in an existing catalog, such as the Jewish Digital Cultural Recovery Project (<https://jdcrrp.org/>), or a new open catalog.

Because libraries across the nation are seeking to downsize their collections and the JCR story is not well known, these books are critically in danger of being **accidentally** discarded and lost forever. This reality adds urgency to our efforts to further develop and share our processes before it is too late. Publishing these records in an existing or new shared catalog will help to protect these endangered books. It will allow these books to tell their story on a broader scale by providing researchers worldwide the opportunity to uncover more details about their story and enabling educators to use the books as teaching tools for those interested in learning more about them and the Holocaust. Because these JCR books have remained largely hidden for over half a century, uncovering them through adding to an existing or building a shared catalog will advance these important restitution efforts. For the first time, the books' rightful owners will be able to easily search for, locate, and be reunited with their property.

A total of **\$50,000** is needed to **completely** fund this project. **\$44,000** would fully support library employees' efforts to develop the toolkit and then identify, catalog, and digitize the unique markings in these books at Towson University and Brandeis. **\$6,000** would support conference travel to disseminate the toolkit in order to encourage other JCR institutions to adopt it and join us in building a shared JCR catalog. Partial support of **\$25,000** would fund development of the toolkit and enable student workers to begin identifying books.

For more information on how to support the JCR project, please contact Geannine Callaghan, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Foundation Relations at Towson University by telephone at 410-704-2299 or email at [gcallaghan@towson.edu](mailto:gcallaghan@towson.edu)

# Practical Tips for a Pitch

- Build the audience using connections
- Pitch for your audience (details and language)
- Don't get bogged down in the background
- Define a big problem you want to solve
  - Not just work for work's sake
- Lean into your past success and strength in the area
  - Can be related/relevant past projects
  - Can be the groundwork you've done for proposed work
- Connect your project directly to reducing/solving the problem
- Create a sense of urgency if you can. What happens if you don't do the work now or at all?
- Budget should include total and amounts for components described in plain language



# IMLS Grant

- Applied for IMLS National Leadership Grants Implementation Category in September 2023 & March 2024
  - Partnership with Brandeis University, Yeshiva University, Jewish Theological Seminary, & University of Denver
  - Sandra R. Berman Center for Humanity, Tolerance & Holocaust Education
- \$249,857 awarded starting August 2024
- Grant outcomes:
  1. Shared catalog of JCR records
  2. Refining best practices for JCR cataloging
  3. Outreach and education



# IMLS grant cancelled

- Grant cancelled in the last wave at the end of April
- Appealed under rationale that project supported EO 14188 “Additional Measures to Combat Anti-Semitism”
- Informed foundations of the status of the grant
- Paid project staff out of prior foundation fundraising
- Curated an additional gift from one foundation



## NOTICE OF GRANT TERMINATION LG-256715-OLS-24

April 28, 2025

Dear IMLS Grantee,

This letter provides notice that the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is terminating your federal grant (Grant Application No. LG-256715-OLS-24) effective April 28, 2025, in accordance with the termination clause in your Award Agreement.

Upon further review, IMLS has determined that your grant is unfortunately no longer consistent with the agency's priorities and no longer serves the interest of the United States and the IMLS Program. IMLS is repurposing its funding allocations in a new direction in furtherance of the President's agenda. Independently and secondly, the President's March 14, 2025, executive order mandates that IMLS eliminate all non-statutorily required activities and functions. See Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy, E.O. 14238 (Mar. 14, 2025). Therefore, IMLS hereby terminates your grant in its entirety effective April 28, 2025.

Under the [General Terms and Conditions for IMLS Discretionary Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards Issued After December 21, 2020](#), the following must be provided to IMLS in a format of your choice no later than May 28, 2025. You should submit these materials to [grantsadmin@imls.gov](mailto:grantsadmin@imls.gov) with your IMLS grant number and "Termination Follow-up" in the subject line:

- (a) a summary of progress achieved under the award (in addition, you may also provide any item produced under the award);
- (b) an itemized accounting of charges incurred against federal award funds and cost sharing prior to the effective date of the termination; and
- (c) a separate itemized accounting and justification for any costs that may have been incurred after the termination date.

In addition, please note the following:

- Failure to furnish the above material may affect your organization's ability to receive future IMLS awards.
- All reimbursement payment requests submitted in eGMS Reach by close of business on the termination date, April 28th, if approved, will be deposited in your banking institution by May 6th. If it is not, you should include that amount in your itemized accounting of charges incurred as directed in (b).

# IMLS grant is back on

- Reinstated a month later in May
- Reallocated funds lost to a software developer/development
- Progress has continued
  - Selecting shared catalog platform
  - Best practices for the NELB/AJL project also viable for JCR
  - Planning outreach at some of the institutions



## NOTICE OF GRANT REINSTATEMENT LG-256715-OLS-24

May 21, 2025

Dear IMLS Grantee,

In accordance with the court's Preliminary Injunction Order of May 13, 2025, in *State of Rhode Island, et al. v. Trump et al.*, case no. 1:25-cv-00128, the Institute of Museum and Library Services is reinstating your federal grant (Grant Award No. LG-256715-OLS-24). This action supersedes any previous notices you may have received related to grant termination.

For transparency, please note that an appeal of the court's Preliminary Injunction Order is pending, which may affect the reinstatement of your grant in the future.

Please contact IMLS through the eGMS Reach system if you have questions. We look forward to following the progress on your grant activities.

Respectfully,

Keith E. Sonderling  
Acting Director  
955 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Suite 4000  
Washington, DC 20024

# Stewardship & Communication

- Interim IMLS reports
- Yearly progress reports shared with foundations
- Continued press on the project
- Outreach & education phase will increase visibility
  - Berman Center partnerships
  - Virtual and in-person training with partner institutions on having a white gloves session



**TU** | **MAGAZINE** ☰

**WEB EXCLUSIVE**

## Saving the lost books of the Holocaust

TU librarians are leading a nationwide effort to identify, preserve and share thousands of Nazi-plundered texts before they're lost to history.

 BY PAMELA GORSUCH '05, '11

# What's the future look like?

- Catalog expansion to include NELB / AJL items?
- Integration with Looted Cultural Assets?
- Further grants?
  - Possible international partnerships
- One foundation is interested in funding some version of the project long-term



# Tying into other initiatives

- Recent dedication of the Kirmani Circle for Faith, Spirituality, & Peace
- Adjacent to our Baltimore Hebrew Institute circulating collection
- Adjacent to an interfaith rotating art exhibit
- Jewish Studies support more broadly



# Questions?

