

Network Against Islamophobia

The Network Against Islamophobia (NAI), a project of [Jewish Voice for Peace](#), was created to serve as a resource to, and work with, JVP chapters and other groups interested in organizing against Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism and to be a partner to the broader, Muslim-led movement against Islamophobia.

We created these materials—a two-session curriculum and resources; a series of modules; and a facilitator guide—so we can be effective, accountable partners in this work.

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Following the Funding Module

Purpose of Module:

This module looks at mainstream Jewish organizations that have a history of funding anti-Muslim hate groups. It analyzes the ways this type of funding promotes and perpetuates Islamophobia and explores ways to hold these groups accountable for their actions. It encourages participants to think critically about who our partners are in the Jewish community in the fight against Islamophobia and about what it means to oppose all forms of Islamophobia.

This module is part of an analysis of the multiple and structural ways Islamophobia manifests itself--and needs to be challenged. We recommend using this module after, or in conjunction with, the [full NAI curriculum](#) or [Intro module](#). This module can also be used in conjunction with the [Jewish Organizations and Islamophobia Module](#) and the [Police Exchange Module](#). Other ideas about how to use the NAI curriculum can be found in the Facilitator Guide.

Goals:

- To develop an understanding of how certain mainstream Jewish organizations have been funding anti-Muslim hate groups
- To reflect on how to hold these groups accountable for the ways such funding perpetuates and promotes Islamophobia

- To think critically about who our partners are within the Jewish community in the fight against Islamophobia, and what it means to oppose all forms of Islamophobia

Materials:

- Handout #1: Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago (JUF)/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Handout #2: Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma
- Handout #3: Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, Jewish Federation of Las Vegas, and Combined Jewish Philanthropy (Greater Boston's Federation)
- Handout #4: A Guide to Who's Who in NAI's "Following the Funding" and "Jewish Organizations and Islamophobia" Modules.

I. Introductions and Opening (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

15 minutes: Introductions, including a brief overview of the agenda and rationale for this module. Briefly provide some background information.

- The current administration under President Trump is greatly accelerating anti-Muslim policies, including Executive Orders intended to implement a Muslim travel ban and "extreme vetting" of refugees from certain Muslim countries.
- In this context, Muslims and those perceived as Muslims are facing increased Islamophobic attacks, including threats to mosques and Muslim community centers, harassment of women in hijab, and other public attacks, beatings, shootings, and arson.
- Some Jewish organizations provide financial support to anti-Muslim hate groups. The Jewish Communal Fund (JCF), the funding arm of the UJA-Jewish Federation of New York, for example, JCF has [supported groups](#) that the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Center for American Progress, and others have identified as purveyors of anti-Muslim hate. JCF [contributed](#) \$100,000 in the 2012-2013 tax years to the American Freedom Defense Initiative (AFDI), run by Pamela Geller, who has aptly been described as "the [queen](#) of Muslim-bashers"; and [gave](#) \$27,880 in 2007 and \$36,200 in 2013 to the Clarion Fund, the group behind some widely distributed anti-Muslim films.¹ In addition, JCF [contributed](#) approximately \$1.4 million between 2011 and 2013 to four other organizations led by prominent anti-Muslim ideologues: Steven Emerson's Investigative Project on Terrorism, the David Horowitz Freedom Center, Daniel Pipes's Middle East Forum, and Frank Gaffney's Center for Security Policy.² (For more information about the anti-Muslim groups and individuals mentioned here and elsewhere in this module, see Handout #4: A Guide to Who's Who in NAI's "Following the Funding" and "Jewish Organizations and Islamophobia" Modules.)

¹Eli Clifton, "[Why Is a Mainstream Jewish Charity Funding Pamela Geller?](#)" *The Forward*, November 21, 2015; Daniel Burke, "[Pamela Geller, 'Queen Of Muslim Bashers,' At Center Of N.Y. 'Mosque' Debate,](#)" *Huffington Post*, May 25, 2011.

²Eli Clifton, "[The Jewish Communal Fund Invests in Islamophobia,](#)" LobeLog, December 15, 2015.

Ask participants to share any knowledge they have of organizations that fund anti-Muslim groups. Jot down responses on chart paper, and leave the paper up to be referred to and added to throughout the module.

II. Following the Funding (35 minutes)

Facilitator:

15 minutes: Share handouts. Divide participants into three groups for an in-depth discussion. Each group will analyze and reflect on the activities of one or more organizations. Ask each group to read through the summary of activities the organizations have supported through their funding of anti-Muslim hate groups.

- Group 1: Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago (JUF)/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Group 2: Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma
- Group 3: Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, Jewish Federation of Las Vegas, and Combined Jewish Philanthropy (Greater Boston's Federation)

10 minutes: Based on the information from the handouts and the discussions, each group will prepare a short skit/role-play to show the problems that can ensue from this type of funding and report on or build a case for why supporting anti-Muslim hate groups through funding is wrong.

10 minutes: Each group share/role-play with the whole group.

III. Holding Organizations Accountable (25 minutes)

Facilitator:

10 minutes: Ask participants to share their thoughts and reflections on how to hold these organizations accountable for the ways their funding of anti-Muslim hate groups perpetuates and promotes Islamophobia.

Guiding Questions:

- Who are our partners in the Jewish community in the fight against Islamophobia?
- Are there ways to engage with some of these organizations that have mixed records?
- What does it mean to oppose all forms of Islamophobia?
- How can organizations that have funded or continue to fund anti-Muslim hate groups be held accountable?
- What can we do as individuals and with our communities?

15 minutes: Guide a group brainstorm on actions that we can take moving forward. Take notes on chart paper or on the board. As a group, come up with an action plan. Each participant can reflect on ways to modify the general action plan to meet their community and organizational needs, including concrete next steps for moving forward in the fight against Islamophobia.

IV. Closing (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

10 minutes: Return to the responses jotted down on chart paper during the introduction to the module and during the activity in Part 3. Ask participants to share their reflections. Guide a closing conversation on questions and thoughts or anything participants want to think more about or will take away with them.

Handout #1

Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago (JUF)/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago

- The Jewish United Fund is the funding arm of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago.
- Despite the Jewish Federation's stated commitment to "stand together to say 'no' to all forms of hate," between 2011 and 2014, JUF gave \$648,750, through its donor advised funds, to the Middle East Forum, founded by Daniel Pipes. Pipes is described by the Southern Poverty Law Center as an influential propagandist "at the center of what is a large and evolving network of Islam-bashing activists."
- In 2012, JUF gave \$26,000 to the Investigative Project on Terrorism, which Steven Emerson founded in 1995. Like Pipes, Emerson, is identified by the Southern Poverty Law Center as an "anti-Muslim extremist . . . frequently cited in public discourse."
- JUF is linked in two known ways to the Donors Capital Fund and Donors Trust, two affiliated donor advised funds with a long history of providing financial support to key organizations in the Islamophobia network and a commitment to keeping its donors anonymous. According to each organization's federal 990 forms, the Jewish Federation gave \$100,000 to Donors Trust in 2010, and Donors Capital Fund gave the Federation's Jewish United Fund \$5.1 million in 2013.
- The Center for American Progress' 2011 report, *Fear Inc.: The Roots of the Islamophobia Network in America*, report identified the Donors Capital Fund as one of the leading funders of Islamophobia in the United States. In 2008, it gave more than \$17 million to the Clarion Fund to distribute 28 million DVDs of the anti-Muslim propagandist film *Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West* as newspaper inserts in presidential election swing states. The film features, among other Islamophobia network leaders, Daniel Pipes and Steve Emerson.

Handout #2

Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma

- According to the Center for American Progress, the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma gave the [Clarion Fund](#) \$75,000 between 2008 and 2009. The Clarion Fund is an offshoot of Aish HaTorah, a strong supporter of radical Israeli settlers, and was a major force behind the distribution in 2008 of *Obsession* and *The Third Jihad*, two virulently anti-Muslim films.
- The Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma accepted nearly \$700,000 between 2010 and 2014 from the Newton D. & Rochelle F. Becker Foundation, which has been identified by the Center for American Progress as a main funder of the Islamophobia industry.
- According to its 2014 and 2015 federal 990 forms, the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma gave a total of more than \$500,000 to five groups in the Islamophobia network, including ACT for America, Center for Security Policy, Investigative Project on Terrorism, Middle East Forum, and Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI).
- The Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma agreed in 2012 to allow the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) to sponsor in the Federation's building a 2012 talk by Pamela Geller on what she termed "Islamic Jew-Hatred." The Federation [announced](#) the event on its website. After Muslim and other civil rights groups wrote a statement condemning the Federation's role, it withdrew its offer of space for Geller's talk, citing concerns related to possible protests and counter-protests. It did not, however, criticize either Geller or the ZOA, a tenant in its building, but did subsequently announce its intent to review its policy on speakers.

Handout #3

Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, Jewish Federation of Las Vegas, and Combined Jewish Philanthropy (Greater Boston's Federation)

Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles

- The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles [received](#) more than [\\$5.5 million](#) between 2005 and 2010 from the Fairbrook Foundation. During this period, Fairbrook was a major financial supporter of anti-Muslim groups like the David Horowitz Freedom Center, a key player in the “[anti-Muslim](#), anti-immigrant and anti-Black movements,” and the Society of Americans for National Existence (SANE), run by David Yerushalmi, Pamela Geller’s lawyer, who developed the legislative template for campaigns against the alleged threat of Sharia.
- The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles received \$550,000 between 2010 and 2014 from the Newton D. & Rochelle F. Becker Foundation. In addition, in 2013 and 2014 alone, Becker gave nearly \$1.1 million to the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles (JCFLA) of the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles. The [Becker board](#) includes the current president/CEO of JCFLA, as well as a former president, a senior vice president, and an account executive of the JCFLA.

Jewish Federation of Las Vegas

- The Jewish Federation of Las Vegas accepted nearly \$7.5 million between 2011 and 2014 from the Adelson Family Foundation. Since 2011, the Adelson Family Foundation, which has a long history of supporting anti-Muslim groups, gave substantial grants to, for example, the Zionist Organization of America, whose national president, Morton Klein, is a fan of the current administration’s [Muslim Ban](#) and Islamophobes Steve [Bannon](#) and Pamela [Geller](#). During this period, Adelson also funded the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) and David Horowitz Freedom Center, two organizations identified as part of the Islamophobia network in America; and Americans for Peace and Tolerance, a Boston group whose head, Charles Jacobs, has [engaged](#) in more than one “destructive campaign against Boston’s Muslim community, which is based on innuendo, half-truths and unproven conspiracy theories.” Adelson [distributed](#) to young people on Birthright-sponsored tours to Israel copies of the anti-Muslim video *Obsession*, which the [New York Times](#) found, had “attracted his support.”

Combined Jewish Philanthropy (Greater Boston's Federation)

- Combined Jewish Philanthropy (CJP) accepted \$6.8 million from the Adelson Family Foundation between 2011 and 2015.
- According to its 2014 and 2015 federal 990 forms, CJP gave a total of more than \$300,000 to groups in the Islamophobia network, including the Clarion Fund, Center for Security Policy, Investigative Project on Terrorism, Middle East Forum, and Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), and to a local anti-Muslim group, Americans for Peace and Tolerance.

Handout #4

A Guide to Who's Who in NAI's "Following the Funding" and "Jewish Organizations and Islamophobia" Modules

Anti-Muslim Individuals and Groups

- The **Clarion Fund/Project** has produced several hateful anti-Muslim videos, including *Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West* (28 million DVDs distributed in swing states of it during the 2008 presidential election); and *The Third Jihad: Radical Islam's Vision for America*, (shown to nearly 1,500 officers at NYPD trainings). Among the featured interviewees are Steven Emerson, Brigitte Gabriel, and Daniel Pipes in *Obsession* and former NYC Mayor Rudy Giuliani and former NYPD Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly in *The Third Jihad*.
- **Steven Emerson** (Investigative Project on Terrorism; Counterterrorism & Security Education and Research Foundation/CTSERF) has [claimed](#) that Islam "sanctions genocide, planned genocide, as part of its religious doctrine." A frequent mainstream media figure, he has a long history of making baseless, inflammatory anti-Muslim claims, such as his assertion on Fox News that Birmingham, England and other European cities were filled with "[no-go zones](#)" where non-Muslims and government officials don't go. In 2007, Emerson met with former Trump White House chief strategist Steve Bannon to discuss Bannon's proposed film, "Destroying the Great Satan: The Rise of Islamic Facism [sic] in America."
- **Brigitte Gabriel** (ACT for America) [maintains](#) that a "practicing Muslim who believes in the teachings of the Quran cannot be a loyal citizen of the United States of America." The Southern Poverty Law Center [describes](#) ACT as "the largest grassroots anti-Muslim group in America." ACT gave an [award](#) in 2016 to CIA Director Mike Pompeo. Gabriel has visited the White House and [posted a photo of herself](#) with Trump at Mar-a-Lago.
- **Frank Gaffney** (Center for Security Policy), a leading anti-Muslim "disinformation expert," is a "birther" and former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense who [views](#) mosques as "Trojan horses" that Muslims use to promote "sedition." He provided [debunked](#) poll data used by the Trump administration to justify the "Muslim ban."
- **Pamela Geller** (American Freedom Defense Initiative/AFDI, Stop Islamization Of America/SIOA, and Stop Islamization Of Nations/SION) has been described as "[the queen](#) of Muslim-bashers." She has spearheaded—and been the public face of—campaigns in numerous cities and towns that involved posting vile anti-Muslim messages at train stations and on buses. Former senior presidential advisor Steve Bannon has had Geller on his [Breitbart](#) radio show seven times and has lauded her as "one of the great American patriots."
- **David Horowitz** (David Horowitz Freedom Center): DHFC projects include *FrontPage Magazine*, a major online purveyor of anti-Muslim conspiracy theories. The Southern Poverty Law Center has [described](#) Horowitz as "the godfather of the modern anti-Muslim movement," He has [called](#) Black Lives Matter the "most vicious racist movement this country has seen since the Ku Klux Klan at its heyday." Horowitz is long-time mentor to White House Advisor [Stephen Miller](#) (author of the recent Muslim immigration ban) and Attorney General [Jeff Sessions](#).
- **Representative Peter King**: In 2011, King, chair of the House homeland Security Committee, launched a series of hearings focusing solely on "Muslim radicalization" during a period of [rapid](#)

[expansion](#) of radical right hate groups and “extremist vigilante organizations.” King previously [maintained](#) that “there are too many mosques in this country” and promoted Steven Emerson’s debunked claim that “80 to 85 percent of mosques in this county are controlled by Islamic Fundamentalists.” King has appeared on Frank Gaffney’s [radio program](#) and Brigitte Gabriel’s [cable television](#) show.

- **Daniel Pipes** (Middle East Forum) [believes](#) that “militant Islam” is “infiltrating America” and “has [endorsed](#) the internment of ethnic Japanese in American prison camps in World War II and held that up as a model for dealing with Muslims today.” MEF’s [Campus Watch](#) project promotes student monitoring of professors on their campus for their views on “the Arab-Israeli conflict” and other topics to ensure that they are not critical of Israel. MEF is an intermediary organization that also funds other anti-Muslim hate groups.
- **Robert Spencer** (Jihad Watch; co-founder Stop the Islamization of America, America Freedom Defense Initiative): Spencer is a self-taught, self-styled “expert” on Islam, who has [claimed](#) that it “is the only major world religion with a developed doctrine and tradition of warfare against unbelievers.” With Geller, he was [banned](#) in 2013 from entering Great Britain to speak at a rally of the anti-Muslim English Defense League, on the grounds that their presence “is not conducive to the public good.” His writing has been recommended by the [FBI](#) for training recruits, and he has led seminars for numerous agencies in of the U.S. intelligence community.
- **David Yerushalmi** (American Freedom Law Center; Society of Americans for National Existence/SANE), lawyer for Pamela Geller and other anti-Muslim ideologues, developed the legislative template for campaigns against the [mythical threat](#) of “Sharia law.” A white supremacist who has [said](#) that “most of the fundamental differences between the races are genetic,” he has [supported](#) legislation making “adherence to Shari’a” (something done by all observant Muslims) a felony, punishable by up to 20 years in prison. He also called in 2007 for deporting all Muslim non-citizens and banning Muslim immigration.

Jewish Organizations

All of these organizations routinely smear and attempt to silence groups speaking out for justice in Palestine/Israel and those doing pro-Israel organizing on college campuses and elsewhere. We believe their support for anti-Muslim organizations and programs relates, at least partly, to their willingness to use anti-Muslim and anti-Arab tropes to bolster U.S. support for the State of Israel.

- **AJC**, “[Global Jewish Advocacy](#)”: AJC has opposed the religious-based firing of a Muslim woman; hired a Director of Muslim-Jewish Relations; opposed legislation targeting “Sharia (religious) law”; and formed a Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council. Nonetheless, it supports Islamophobia through Executive Director Davis Harris’ virulently anti-Muslim message, broadcast biweekly since 2001 on CBS radio stations. It normalizes Islamophobia through promoting anti-Muslim books on the airwaves; publicly describing as “necessary” Rep. Peter King’s 2011 anti-Muslim congressional hearings; and remaining silent when Trump first called for a Muslim ban. AJC has received several hundred thousand dollars from funders in the Islamophobia network in America.
- **Anti-Defamation League (ADL)**: The ADL has backed mosque construction, condemned anti-Muslim hate speech and acts, opposed state anti-Sharia laws and Trump’s Muslim ban, and issued “backgrounders” on various anti-Muslim ideologues. However, the ADL engaged in illegal spying, starting in the 1950s, on Arab-American and other progressive groups; and has a long

history of [labeling](#) Muslim community groups as “terrorist sympathizers” and trying to exclude them from the public sphere. The ADL was notably silent during the many years in which the NYPD engaged in discriminatory surveillance of Muslim communities, even giving an award to the commanding officer of the NYPD Intelligence Division that had implemented the surveillance program. The ADL has taken money from such funders of anti-Muslim and anti-Palestinian hate as the [Adelson Family Foundation](#). The ADL Foundation has given grants to Steven Emerson’s [Investigative Project on Terrorism](#).

- **[Jewish Federations](#)**: The [Jewish Federation of North America](#) has 148 local member federations and 300 network communities in the United States and Canada. While each federation is autonomous, support for Israel is central to their common mission. Some Jewish federations have strongly supported Muslims: when arson destroyed a mosque; an Islamic center sought to expand; and Trump proposed Muslim Ban 1.0 (publicly criticized by [125](#) local Jewish federations). But some federations have helped amplify anti-Muslim hate by sponsoring public events featuring anti-Muslim extremists like those described above. Some have accepted hundreds of thousands—even millions—of dollars from foundations that are part of the Islamophobia network in America. Some federations (or their affiliates) have given substantial funding to groups run by some of the country’s most prominent Islamophobes. Some have provided support—through word, deed, or silence—for Islamophobic campaigns, actions, and individuals: opposing the building of an Islamic center, or having as a keynote speaker at major events the Commissioner of the NYPD during a period of religious profiling and pervasive violation of Muslims’ civil liberties.
- **[Jewish Communal Fund \(JCF\)](#)**. The JCF is a donor-advised fund that “[invests in Islamophobia](#).” The United Jewish Appeal-Jewish Federation of New York has a “[controlling financial interest](#)” in JCF. Between 2001 and 2013, JCF gave approximately \$1.5 million to groups that are part of the Islamophobia network in America. The Southern Poverty Law Center has identified the founders of all of these groups as “[anti-Muslim extremists](#).” The JCF [contributed](#) \$100,000 to the American Freedom Defense Initiative (Pamela Geller) between 2012 and 2013; [contributed \\$477,190](#) to The Investigative Project on Terrorism (Steven Emerson) between 2006 and 2013; [\\$250,020](#) to the David Horowitz Freedom Center between 2005 and 2013; and [\\$659,060](#) to the Middle East Forum (Daniel Pipes) between 2001 and 2013.
- **[Jewish United Fund \(JUF\) of Metropolitan Chicago](#)**, the funding arm of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago (Jewish Federation): JUF has recently stressed the importance of interfaith partnerships, especially with Muslims. Yet, JUF has [supported](#) Steven Emerson’s [Investigative Project on Terrorism](#) and provided major funding to Daniel Pipes’ [Middle East Forum](#). JUF also accepted \$5.1 million in 2013 from the Donors Capital Fund, a [leading funder](#) of Islamophobia. JUF refused to condemn Trump’s appointment of Steve Bannon, whose Breitbart news outlet regularly promotes both anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic ideologies.
- **[Zionist Organization of America \(ZOA\)](#)**, “the oldest pro-Israel organization in the United States”: The ZOA is unapologetically anti-Muslim. It has sponsored talks by Pamela Geller and [refused](#) to condemn her repugnant anti-Muslim bus ads. ZOA President Morton Klein has supported [profiling](#) Muslims and Trump’s [Muslim ban](#); and accepted (with Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Ron Dermer) the Freedom Flame Award from the [Center for Security Policy](#), the organization headed by anti-Muslim conspiracy theorist Frank Gaffney.