



2025 Greater Boston Jewish Community Study.

A large, semi-circular blue-tinted photograph of the Boston skyline is positioned in the lower half of the page. It features prominent buildings like the Old State House and the Prudential Tower, along with a dense area of trees in the foreground.

**Qualitative
methodology
report.**

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Introduction

The Greater Boston Jewish Community Study 2025 is the seventh in a series of studies conducted every ten years since 1965. This study, like the ones before it, is an opportunity to learn about and reflect on the Greater Boston Jewish community, including the ways in which it is meeting the needs of community members, the challenges it faces, and how it can build and support a strong, safe future here.

One component of the 2025 study was a probability survey of Jewish households in the Greater Boston region. Altogether, 4,776 Jewish households completed the survey. Details of the survey's methodology can be found [here](#). To complement the survey, Rosov Consulting conducted qualitative research in the form of in-depth interviews and focus groups. This methodology report explains the recruitment of qualitative research participants, the development of interview and focus group guides, the conduct of the interviews and focus groups themselves, analysis of the resulting qualitative data, the strengths and limitations of qualitative research, and human research participant protections and oversight.

Recruitment and Consent

Rosov Consulting worked with Combined Jewish Philanthropies, the study sponsor, to select demographic, social identity, Jewish, and communal engagement characteristics around which focus group and interview participants were recruited. Table 1 displays the characteristics of focus group participants and Table 2 the characteristics of interviewees. The tables also provide the number of survey respondents with each criterion, the number recruited, and the number of people who ultimately participated.

Both interview and focus group participants were recruited from among survey respondents who indicated they were open to recontact for additional research and met one or more of the selected recruitment criteria. Out of the 4,776 total responses to the survey, 2,409 (50%) agreed to be recontacted for additional research and provided their email addresses.

For the 56 one-on-one interviews, 134 survey respondents were emailed a maximum of three times between April and August 2025 to schedule an interview. For the 12 focus groups (74 participants), 559 survey respondents were emailed a maximum of two times between July and August 2025 to complete the scheduler survey. Once enough potential participants in a focus group indicated availability for the same time slot, they received an invitation to a focus group at that time. Participants then received a reminder one business day before the focus group.

All qualitative research participants provided informed consent to their participation in writing as part of the recruitment, selection, and scheduling process. They again consented verbally to their participation at the start of their interview or focus group.

Fifty of the one-on-one interviewees received a \$50 Visa gift card through a platform called Tremendous after participating in an interview. All focus group participants and the six interviewees who identified themselves as having a disability received a \$75 gift card for participating, also through Tremendous. Interviewing participants with a disability was originally under the focus group portion of the IRB protocol, which specified a \$75 incentive per participant. When the decision was made to change these to individual interviews, that incentive amount remained.

Table 1. Focus Group Participants

Characteristic	# of respondents who agreed to be recontacted with this characteristic	# of respondents invited to focus group for this characteristic*	Participants in focus group for this characteristic*
Jews of Color	50	31	4
LGBTQ+	278	50	7
Sephardic or Mizrahi	100	56	7
Interfaith couple without children	339	50	6
Interfaith couple with children	169	50	6
Child attends religious school	357	50	7
Zionist	1,524	51	8
Anti-Zionist	307	50	7
Connected with a Jewish organization (attended a Jewish event or participated with a Jewish organization in the past year)	1,983	51	6
Not connected to a Jewish organization (did not attend any Jewish event or participate with any Jewish organization in the past year)	399	20	5
Raised interfaith	296	50	7
Does not identify as Jewish and lives in Jewish household	155	50	4

Table 2. Interview Participants

Characteristic	# of respondents who agreed to be recontacted with this characteristic	# of respondents invited with this characteristic	Total interviewees with this characteristic
Jews of Color	50	7	5
LGBTQ+	278	25	11
People with a disability ¹	283	45	11
Sephardic or Mizrahi	100	13	5
Economically vulnerable	301	19	9
Grandchildren in the Boston area	305	23	8
Children in the household	594	42	19
Single young adults	132	27	11
Interfaith couple without children	339	11	5
Interfaith couple with children	169	19	5
Child attends religious school	357	26	12
Interest in adult education	1,470	60	33
Any social service received from a Jewish organization	129	13	7
Zionist	1,524	67	31
Anti-Zionist	307	35	12
Discomfort with discussing Israel in Jewish spaces	581	36	16

¹ This includes participants who were originally considered for a focus group, but instead were invited to a one-to-one interview.

Interview and Focus Group Guides

Interview and focus group guides were developed to include a core set of questions asked of all participants and others specific to the demographic and identity criteria selected for qualitative research. Core questions covered topics such as the meanings of Jewish identity and community; connections with other Jewish people and organizations; barriers to Jewish engagement; affordability; geography; human service needs; attitudes and experiences regarding Israel; and antisemitism. Group-specific questions inquired into participants' perspectives and experiences relevant to their life stage, circumstances, or identities: for example, positive and negative experiences in Jewish spaces; how decisions are made regarding children's Jewish education; balancing different traditions in interfaith households; and the experiences of members of diverse social groups (e.g., LGBTQ+, Jews of Color, Sephardic/Mizrahi).

Interviewees who met more than one demographic, identity, Jewish, or communal criteria were asked questions related to all of the criteria they met. Questions for focus group participants were limited to the general questions asked of all focus group participants and specific questions related to the topic of the focus group, regardless of other criteria focus group participants may have met.

Conducting Interviews and Focus Groups

In total, Rosov Consulting conducted 56 interviews and 12 focus groups between April 2025 and September 2025, with a total of 130 research participants. The original qualitative research plan included 50 one-on-one interviews and 12 focus groups. A focus group of people who identify as having a disability was one of the original 12 planned focus groups; however, the research team later determined, in consultation with CJP, that it would be preferable to offer one-on-one interviews to participants who identified themselves as having a disability due to the sensitive nature of the topics discussed. Interviews with participants who identified as having a disability brought the total number of interviews to 56. Another focus group, for adults who do not identify as Jewish but live in a Jewish household, was then added, leaving the focus group total at 12.

All focus groups and interviews were conducted online via Zoom and were recorded for transcription purposes and for later reference as needed.

Analysis and Reporting

Once completed, focus groups were transcribed in Rev, a platform for transcription. Interviews were transcribed in CoLoop, an AI-assisted platform for processing and analyzing qualitative data. Analysis of both the interviews and focus groups was conducted in CoLoop by two researchers who conducted the interviews and focus groups, and so had deep familiarity with the content. Within CoLoop, each participant was tagged for their relevant demographic and other characteristics. For each core question asked of all participants, responses were examined in aggregate (across the entire sample) as well as filtered by demographic and other characteristics to allow for comparison across segments (e.g., comparison of barriers discussed by LGBTQ+ vs. other groups vs. the general sample). Researchers supplemented this analysis by querying the data around specific questions using CoLoop's AI Chat function. Interpretations suggested by CoLoop (for example, about the commonality of a certain theme or topic) were always verified by the human analyst against the transcripts; quotations supplied by CoLoop were checked for context and relevance. Qualitative data and analysis from the focus groups and interviews are reported in various public-facing reports. Analysis was also provided to the study sponsor in client-facing documentation.

Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative Research

Qualitative methods allow researchers to uncover rich and nuanced perspectives, understandings, experiences, motivations, and needs of research participants. In this way, the data from qualitative research complements the broad patterns and big pictures provided by quantitative methods such as probability surveys. Unlike survey methods, though, qualitative methods are not intended to produce representative samples of any particular group. Consequently, learnings from focus group and interview participants presented in reports should not be taken as representative of the population segments from which participants were recruited. Instead, qualitative perspectives should be understood as reflecting important themes that occurred among and across the qualitative research participants. They should also be understood in conversation with the community survey data to gain insight into people's lived experiences.

Human Subjects Research Protection

The Greater Boston Jewish Community Study 2025 study was conducted with oversight by the University of Southern Maine's (USM) Institutional Review Board (IRB), managed by the university's Office of Research Integrity and Outreach. Key researchers working on the project received human subjects research training prior to fielding the study, and all study procedures, questionnaires, interview and focus group guides, and outreach materials (in all languages) were reviewed and approved by the USM IRB. The University of Southern Maine received IRB accreditation from the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Program (AAHRPP) in September 2022. AAHRPP is an international independent nonprofit organization that reviews and accredits an institution's human research protections program (HRPP).

Interviews

Recruitment Messaging

First invitation

Subject: Interview invitation – Boston Jewish Community Study

Hello,

This is [sender] from Rosov Consulting, a research firm partnering with Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) to conduct the CS25 Greater Boston Jewish Community Study. Thank you for completing the survey we distributed previously.

At the end of the survey, you indicated that you would be willing to participate in further research with us. We are pleased to invite you to participate in a **45-minute Zoom interview** to discuss your experiences, interests, priorities, and concerns as they relate to Jewish life in your community. In thanks, we would send you a **\$50 electronic gift card after the interview is completed**. The interview would be strictly confidential, meaning that nothing you share with us would be attributed to your name or other personally identifiable information.

If you are still willing to speak with us, you can **follow this link** to schedule an interview time with a member of our team and provide your informed consent to participate. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at this email address if you have any questions.

Many thanks,
[Sender]

Invitation reminder

Subject: REMINDER: Interview invitation – Boston Jewish Community Study

Hello,

I am following up on my earlier email about scheduling a conversation with you as part of our work on the Boston Jewish Community Study. **Are you able to speak with me for 45 minutes via Zoom?** If so, **please follow this link** to schedule a time to chat and provide your informed consent to participate. As a reminder, the interview would be confidential, meaning that nothing you share with us would be attributed to your name or other personally identifiable information. We will send you a **\$50 electronic gift card after the interview** in thanks for your time.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Best,
[Sender]

Final Invitation Reminder

Subject: Final reminder: Interview invitation

Hello,

I am reaching out one last time in the hope of scheduling some time to talk with you as part of the Boston Jewish Community Study. **Would you be willing to participate in a 45-minute Zoom interview?** The interview will be strictly confidential, meaning that nothing you say will be associated with your name or other personally identifiable information. **To thank you, we will send you a \$50 gift card** after completing the interview.

If you are willing to speak with us, **please follow this link** to schedule a time to chat and provide your informed consent to participate.

All the best,

[Sender]

Informed Consent

Thank you for your interest and willingness to participate in an interview about the Boston Jewish Community. This study is being sponsored by Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) to help them better understand the Boston Jewish community and how to serve it.

The interview should take approximately 60 minutes and will be conducted by Zoom. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the focus group, for any reason, and without any prejudice. If you decide to participate in the focus group, you have the right not to answer any individual question or questions presented by the researchers or other participants.

Rosov Consulting will treat the information we collect in the focus group confidentially, meaning that nothing you share will be attributed to you specifically, to your name, or to other personally identifiable information in any reports prepared for CJP or for public audiences. The focus group will be video or audio recorded for the purposes of transcription. All information gathered will be stored in a secure location, in accordance with the Rosov Consulting privacy policy, which you can read here: <https://www.rosovconsulting.com/privacy/>.

If you would like to discuss this study further, please contact Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz at lkberkowitz@rosovconsulting.com.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact University of Southern Maine IRB (the body that oversees our protection of study participants) at (207) 780-4517 or USMORIO@maine.edu.

Interview Guide

Thank you so much for your willingness to participate in this interview today. My name is [Name], and I'm from Rosov Consulting. We're doing these interviews as part of a larger study of the Boston Jewish community that we're conducting.

Before we start, I want to go over a few things with you. Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You may withdraw from participating at any time. As we talk, you are free to pass on any specific question or questions you do not want to answer. Everything you share in this conversation will be kept confidential by our research team. This means we will not share anything you say in association with your name or other identifying information.

Some of the questions I'll ask you are based on answers that you provided in the survey.

This conversation should last approximately 45 minutes, and as noted in the informed consent document you signed when sharing your availability, will be recorded. The recording will be kept private and secure and will only be used for note-taking purposes.

Do you have any questions before I begin the recording and get started?

I. IDENTITY AND CONNECTIONS [ALL]

- 1. We want to start with some questions around your Jewish identity and Jewish connections. What does being Jewish mean to you personally and what aspects of being Jewish are important to you PERSONALLY? Religion, culture, community, family, friends, organizations?**
- 2. When I use the phrase "Jewish community," what does that mean to you?**
- 3. In what ways are you socially connected to other Jews and if you are connected, how important are those connections to you?**
- 4. In what ways are you connected to Jewish organizations, and if you are connected, how important are these connections to you?**
 - a. Probe: How do you make decisions about if and when to participate in Jewish organizations and programs?

II. BARRIERS TO CONNECTIONS/INVOLVEMENT [ALL]

- 5. Are there things that get in the way of your being as involved or connected to a Jewish community in Boston as you'd like to be? If so, what are they?**
 - a. Listen for and probe as appropriate on things they mention (but no need to read off all these topics): Cost, services, time commitment, geographic location, linguistic barriers, denominational barriers, demographics, awareness of options, lack of connections, feeling unwelcome, etc.
 - b. Probe: What kinds of things could Jewish organizations do that might help you feel more connected to a Jewish community in Boston?
- 6. Are there things you are looking for from a Jewish community in Boston and Jewish organizations that you haven't found?**

- 7. Do you ever feel unwelcome or uncomfortable in a Jewish organization or in Jewish community spaces because of other identities you also have, and if so, please tell me a little about that?**
- a. Listen for mentions of social identities/characteristics, (e.g. LGBTQ, Jews of Color, disability, newcomer, financial situation) and probe as appropriate for more information if needed. No need to name identities from the survey responses.
- 8. Does your Jewish identity ever feel in conflict with your participation or membership in other communities or groups in Boston?**
- a. Probe if respondent indicates a conflict: What kinds of support or resources might help you in those situations?

III. AFFORDABILITY [ALL]

- 9. I'm going to present a few different situations that all have to do with the affordability of Jewish life. First, have you ever faced a situation where you wanted to do something Jewishly in Boston but weren't able to afford it? Or needed to spend money on other things rather than something in the Jewish community?**
- a. If yes, probe as appropriate: Can you tell me about one of those experiences? How did it make you feel?
- 10. Have you ever been in a situation where you could afford to do something Jewishly in Boston but the price seemed too high compared to the value you would get from it, and so you decided not to do it?**
- a. If yes, probe as appropriate: Can you tell me about one of those experiences? How did it make you feel?
- 11. Do you ever feel like you make financial sacrifices in other parts of your life in order to participate in Jewish community?**
- a. If yes, probe as appropriate: Can you tell me about one of those experiences? How did it make you feel?
- 12. Have you ever applied for financial assistance from Jewish organizations—for a membership, school, or program?**
- If yes, probe as appropriate: Can you tell me more about that experience and how it felt for you?
- If no, probe: Is that because you haven't needed financial assistance, or you could have used it but weren't aware of financial assistance options, or you were aware but didn't want to ask, or some other reason?
- If didn't want to ask, probe as appropriate: Why didn't you want to ask? What would help you feel more comfortable asking for financial help?

IV. RESIDENCE [ALL]

13. I want to ask you some questions about where you live. Can you tell me what drew you to live there?

- a. Listen for factors like housing affordability, family, friends, and schools, and probe as appropriate about things they mention.
- b. Probe if not addressed above: How important, if at all, was being near other Jews or near Jewish organizations in your decision to live there?

V. SINGLE YOUNG ADULTS (NO CHILDREN) [MODULE]

14. One of the things we are interested in is the experience of young Jewish adults. Can you tell me what it's like to live as a young Jewish adult in the Boston area today? Do you feel you have ample opportunities to connect to other Jews your age and participate in a Jewish community, if that's important to you?

15. Is there anything Jewish communities or organizations in Boston could offer to families like yours that is not currently offered?

VI. IN-MARRIED RESPONDENTS WITH CHILDREN [MODULE]

16. One of the things we're interested in is the experiences of families with children in the Jewish community. Can you tell me a little about your experience raising kids in Boston generally and specifically about raising them Jewishly in Boston?

- a. If Jewish education/engagement for kids isn't mentioned, probe as appropriate: Have there been ample opportunities for Jewish education or other forms of Jewish engagement for your kids?

17. Is there anything Jewish communities or organizations in Boston could offer to families like yours that is not currently offered?

VII. YOUNG INTERFAITH COUPLES, NO CHILDREN [MODULE]

18. One of the things we're interested in is the experiences of interfaith couples. Can you tell me about your experiences with Jewish community and Jewish organizations in Boston as an interfaith couple?

19. How welcomed and included as an interfaith couple do you feel in Jewish spaces here?

Listen for specific examples and, if not mentioned, probe as appropriate: Can you give me some examples of when you have felt welcomed and included? When you haven't felt welcomed?

20. As part of an interfaith couple, what sorts of things make you feel invited and welcomed in a Jewish community?

21. Is there anything Jewish communities or organizations in Boston could offer to you and your partner that is not currently offered?

VIII. INTERFAITH COUPLES, WITH CHILDREN [MODULE]

22. One of the things we're interested in is the experiences of interfaith families with children. Can you tell me about your experiences with Jewish community as an interfaith family, especially with raising kids?

Probe if Jewish education/engagement for children isn't mentioned: Have there been ample opportunities for Jewish education or other forms of Jewish engagement for your kids?

23. How welcomed and included as an interfaith family do you feel in Jewish spaces here? (Ask for concrete examples if none are given.)

- a. Listen for specific examples and, if not mentioned, probe as appropriate: Can you give me some concrete examples of when you have felt welcomed and included? When you haven't felt welcomed?

24. As an interfaith family, what sort of things make you feel invited and welcomed in a Jewish community?

25. Is there anything Jewish communities or organizations in Boston could offer to families like yours that is not currently offered?

IX. OLDER ADULTS WHO ARE GRANDPARENTS [MODULE]

26. You mentioned in the survey that you have grandchildren in the Boston area. Can you tell me more about your grandkids and your relationship with them? Do you live near them? How much time do you spend with them in a given week? In what kinds of activities?

Probe, if no reference to Jewish things: What role, if any, do you play in your grandchildren's Jewish lives? (e.g., Family get-togethers? Holidays? Financial support for Jewish activities/engagement? Driving them to Jewish activities/schools?)

X. HUMAN SERVICE NEEDS [ALL]

27. In the past, have you turned to a Jewish organization or agency in Boston for personal or family help? If so, can you tell me about that experience? How was the service and support you received? How important was it to you to have a Jewish organization to turn to for help? [Reiterate confidentiality if necessary].

28. If no: Imagine that in the near future, you need some kind of personal or family help—counseling or therapy, care for an elderly relative, or financial support because you lost a job. How important would it be to you to have a Jewish organization or agency to turn to for help?

XI. ISRAEL [ALL]

I want to turn to two topics that have been in news a lot lately—Israel and antisemitism. First Israel ...

29. What does Israel mean to you today? What kinds of connections do you have to Israel? And have those meanings and connections changed since October 7 and its aftermath?
30. Do you feel like you can talk authentically and safely about (your connections to Israel and) your views on Israel in Jewish spaces? Do you feel like your views on Israel are represented in Jewish spaces?
31. Do you feel like you can talk authentically and safely about (your connections to Israel) and your views on Israel in general (non-Jewish) spaces in Boston?

XII. ANTISEMITISM [ALL]

32. Turning to the issue of antisemitism: Can you tell me about whether and how antisemitism comes up in or affects your life?
- a. Probe as appropriate if person mentions a specific incident and it seems like there is more to learn: Tell me about a time when you personally had a direct experience with antisemitism? How did you react to it?
 - b. How safe do you feel as a Jewish person in Boston?

XIII. ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY [MODULE]

33. Last issue: we spoke earlier about affording to participate in Jewish community. You mentioned in the survey that making ends meet is difficult right now. Can you tell me about this? How does this financial situation affect your life in general and how does it affect how you think about your place in Jewish communities? [Reiterate confidentiality if necessary.]
- a. Listen for and probe further as appropriate if respondents mention things like food, housing, health and healthcare, transportation, debt, savings. No need to read off the list.
 - b. Probe as appropriate about specific things they mention regarding their financial situation and Jewish communities.

XIV. CONCLUSION [ALL]

34. We've talked about a lot of topics. Is there anything else you want us to know about your experience with Jewish community, organizations, and life in Boston today?

End: clarify anything that's not clear, thank respondent, let them know to expect the gift card in their email inbox in the next few weeks.

Interviews with people who identify as having a disability

Recruitment Messaging

Invitation to participate in interview

Subject: Invitation to participate in Zoom interview for the Greater Boston Jewish Community Study (\$75 for participation)

Hello,

Thank you for recently completing the Greater Boston Jewish community survey and agreeing to be recontacted about additional research. The community survey is part of a larger study being conducted by Rosov Consulting for Combined Jewish Philanthropies. Based on your responses to the survey, Rosov Consulting is pleased to invite you to participate in a follow-up Zoom interview. The interview will last about 30 minutes and focus on your experiences in the Boston Jewish community, in particular as someone who identifies as having a disability. Rosov Consulting will treat the information you provide in the interview confidentially, meaning that nothing you share will be attributed to you specifically or to other personally identifiable information in any reports and other materials prepared for CJP or for public audiences.

If you are still interested, and we hope you are, please [follow this link](#) to read more about the research and to select a time for your interview, if you consent to participate. If you complete an interview, you will receive a \$75 gift card in thanks for your time.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Best,
[Sender]

Reminder to participate

Subject: REMINDER: Interview invitation (\$75 for participation)

Hello,

This is a friendly reminder to complete our scheduling survey for a focus group about the Jewish community in Greater Boston. As we previously mentioned, the interview will last about 30 minutes and focus on your experiences in the Boston Jewish community as someone who identifies as having a disability.

If you are still interested, please [follow this link](#) to learn more about the study and select a time for an interview, if you consent to participate.

All who do participate in a group will receive a **\$75 electronic gift card** as thanks for your time.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Best,
[Sender]

Informed Consent

Thank you for your interest in participating in an interview about your experiences in the Boston Jewish community. The focus group is part of a study sponsored by Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP). The study is designed to help CJP and other Jewish community organizations better understand the Boston Jewish community and how to serve it.

The interview will last approximately 30 minutes and will be conducted by Zoom. During the interview, the researcher will ask you about your experience in the Boston Jewish community as **someone who identifies as having a disability**. We will not be asking about the specifics of your condition, and you are free to share as much or as little as you like. Rather, we will focus on your comfort and ability to participate in institutional Jewish life.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the interview, for any reason, and without any prejudice. If you decide to participate in the interview, you have the right not to answer any individual question or questions presented by the researcher.

Rosov Consulting will treat the information we collect in the focus group confidentially, meaning that nothing you share will be attributed to you specifically or to other personally identifiable information in any reports and other materials prepared for CJP or for public audiences. Your words may be quoted in reports and other materials prepared for public audiences, but no personally identifiable information will be associated with them.

With your permission, the interview will be video and audio recorded for the purposes of transcription and analysis. All information gathered in the interview will be stored in a secure location, in accordance with the Rosov Consulting privacy policy, which you can read here: <https://www.rosovconsulting.com/privacy/>.

All interview studies have potential benefits and risks. You may benefit by contributing to the understanding and knowledge of experiences and perspectives among those who identify as Jewish in the Greater Boston area, by being a member of a community that is better served and supported because of action taken as a result of this research, or simply by enjoying the conversation. You may experience minimal risks associated with conversations, especially those involving issues of identity and community belonging, including emotional or social discomfort; regret at oversharing; or unintentional disclosure of confidential information. For up to 90 days after the focus group is over, if you wish to have part or all of your contributions redacted from the written transcript, you may request it by contacting Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz at lkberkowitz@rosovconsulting.com.

After you have participated in the interview, you will receive a **\$75 electronic gift card** as thanks for your time.

If you would like to discuss the interview or the study it is part of further, please contact Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz at lkberkowitz@rosovconsulting.com. If at any time you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant, need information, want to provide feedback, or experience a research-related injury, please contact the USM Office of Research Integrity and Outreach at 207-780-4517 or usmorio@maine.edu. Click here for more information for participants.

By clicking "Continue" below, you are providing your informed consent to participate. You will then be taken to a secure webpage to schedule a time for an interview. If none of the times offered fit

your schedule, please contact Rosov Consulting and they will schedule a time that works for you. When the interview begins, the researcher may seek your verbal consent once again to participate.

We are grateful for your willingness to consider contributing to this important research.

Interview Guide

Welcome to our interview and thank you for participating. My name is [Name], and I'm from Rosov Consulting. We're conducting these interviews as part of a larger study of the Boston Jewish community on behalf of Combined Jewish Philanthropies. Before we start, I want to go over a few things with you.

This conversation should last approximately 30 minutes, and as noted when we reached out to about participating, it will be recorded. This recording will only be used internally at Rosov Consulting and will be saved in a secured location, so that we can safeguard your identity. I am going to start the recording now **[start recording]**.

As you know from the letter we sent you, this interview will focus on your experience as someone with a disability within the Boston Jewish community. We will not be asking about the specifics of your condition, and you are free to share as much or as little as you like. Rather, we will focus on your comfort and ability to participate in institutional Jewish life.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You are free to pass on any specific question or questions you do not want to answer, and anyone may withdraw at any time. Everything you share today is considered confidential information, which means we will not associate what you say with your name or any other personally identifying information -- but we may quote your words without personally identifiable information in reports and other materials we prepare for CJP or public audiences.

We do not anticipate that the conversation will cause substantial discomfort or distress, but just in case, I'm putting information about local help lines in the chat. One is for Jewish Family and Community Services of Boston, which offers free mental health assistance during business hours Monday-Friday; and another is the Massachusetts Emergency Services Program, a 24-hour crisis helpline.

[Copy and paste the following in the Zoom chat:]

Jewish Family and Community Services of Boston
Mental Health Connect Line: 781-693-5562
Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm
<https://www.jfcsboston.org/our-services/mental-health-emotional-wellbeing>
Massachusetts Emergency Services Program: 1-877-382-1609
24 hr. crisis line

This study has been approved by the University of Southern Maine Office of Research Integrity and Outreach. *[If participant has questions: If at any time you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant, need information, want to provide feedback, or experience a research-related injury, please contact the USM Office of Research Integrity and Outreach at 207-780-4517.]*

You previously provided informed consent when you told us the times you were available to meet. As we begin, we want to confirm your informed consent with an audible "yes" or a nod of approval. Do you consent to participate? **[An audible "yes" (when audio recording) or a nod of approval should be recorded from each participant.]**

Thank you. We are now ready to move on to our conversation.

IDENTITY AND CONNECTIONS

- 1. We want to start with some questions around Jewish identity and Jewish community. What does being Jewish mean to you personally and what aspects of being Jewish are important to you PERSONALLY? Religion, culture, community, traditions, family, friends, organizations?**
- 2. When I use the phrase “Jewish community,” what does that mean to you?**
- 3. What comes to mind when you picture the Boston Jewish community in particular?**
 - a. Probe: What are one or two things you like about the Boston Jewish community?
 - b. Probe: What are one or two things you don’t like about the Boston Jewish community?

EXPERIENCE AS A PERSON WITH DISABILITIES IN THE BOSTON JEWISH COMMUNITY

Switching topics, I want to talk about your experience as someone with one or more disabilities in the Boston Jewish Community.

- 4. First of all, tell me about what ways are you connected to Jewish organizations in general? If you are, I would love to hear which organizations or types of organizations specifically, if you are willing to share. How important, or unimportant, are these organizational connections to you?**
- 5. In general, how welcome do you feel in Jewish community and organizational spaces, given your particular disability or disabilities? As a reminder, you can share as little or as much as you want about your condition.**
- 6. Do you ever feel uncomfortable or unable to fully participate in a Jewish organization or in Jewish community spaces because of your disability or disabilities? If so, please tell us a little about that.**
 - a. What could Jewish organizations do better to improve your experience?
- 7. What do you think is important for Jewish organizations in Boston to know either about people with your disability, or about people with disabilities more generally in your community?**
- 8. Other than issues around disability, are there other things that get in the way of your being as involved or connected to a Jewish community in Boston as you’d like to be? If so, what are they?**
- 9. Do you feel you have any meaningful Jewish community outside of formal organizations—for example, with family or friends? If so, tell me about this. What do these connections provide for you?**
- 10. Does your Jewish identity ever feel in conflict with your participation or membership in other communities or groups in Boston?**

11. Are there things you are looking for from a Jewish community in Boston and Jewish organizations that you haven't found?

12. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences with Jewish community in Boston that we haven't covered, especially in relationship with your experience as someone with one or more disabilities?

Thank you all so much for your time and all that you shared today. We will follow up in the next couple weeks with the gift card we've promised as thanks for your time today. That will arrive by email. Please reach out if you have any further questions.

Focus Groups

Recruitment Messaging

Invitation to complete scheduler

Subject: Availability for CJP Community Study Focus Group (\$75 for participation)

Hello,

Thank you for recently completing the Greater Boston Jewish community survey and agreeing to be recontacted about additional research. The community survey is part of a larger study being conducted by Rosov Consulting for Combined Jewish Philanthropies. Based on your responses to the community survey, Rosov Consulting is pleased to invite you to participate in a follow-up focus group.

Template 1: In the focus group, we will facilitate a conversation among you and others about your experiences in the Boston Jewish community, and in particular your experiences [as someone who identifies as a Jew of Color] [as someone who identifies as LGBTQ+] [as someone who identifies as Sephardic or Mizrahi]. All other participants in the focus group will also share the same identity.

Template 2: In the focus group, we will facilitate a conversation among you and others about your experiences in the Boston Jewish community, and in particular your experiences [as someone in an interfaith relationship] [as someone raising children in an interfaith family] [as someone who was raised in an interfaith family]. All other participants in the focus group will also [be part of interfaith relationships] [be raising children in interfaith families] [have been raised in interfaith families].

Template 3: In the focus group, we will facilitate a conversation among you and others about your experiences in the Boston Jewish community, and in particular, about your experiences a parent with children in part-time Jewish educational programs, such as religious schools at a synagogue. All other focus group participants will also have children in part-time program like this.

Template 4: In the focus group, we will facilitate a conversation among you and others about your experiences in the Boston Jewish community, in particular your experiences with Jewish organizations and institutions. All participants in the focus group will have indicated on the survey that they are members of or regular participants in Jewish organizations.

Template 5: In the focus group, we will facilitate a conversation among you and others about your experiences in the Boston Jewish community, in particular your perspectives on Jewish organizations and institutions. All participants in the focus group will have indicated on the survey that they are **not** currently members of or regular participants in Jewish organizations. The focus group is designed to understand why the focus group members are not currently connected to Jewish organizations.

Template 6: In the focus group, we will facilitate a conversation among you and others about your experiences in the Boston Jewish community. In addition, the focus group will discuss your feelings, perspectives, and thoughts about Israel and its role in your life and the Boston Jewish community. All participants in the focus group will have indicated on the survey that they consider themselves Zionists.

Template 7: In the focus group, we will facilitate a conversation among you and others about your experiences in the Boston Jewish community. In addition, the focus group will discuss your feelings, perspectives, and thoughts about Israel and its role in your life and the Boston Jewish community. All participants in the focus group will have indicated on the survey that they do **not** consider themselves Zionists.

If you are still interested, and we hope you are, please [follow this link](#) to read more about consenting to participate and to indicate your availability for a 75-minute Zoom focus group. Please let us know **all the times** you are available. Due to the unpredictability of scheduling, it is possible that you may not ultimately be selected for participation. All who do participate in a group will receive a **\$75 electronic gift card** as thanks for your time.

[Please click here](#) to indicate your availability by X. If you are selected to participate in a group, we will confirm the date and time no later than 48 hours before the focus group.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Best,
[Sender]

Reminder to complete scheduler

Subject: REMINDER: Focus Group Availability (\$75 for participation)

Hello,

This is a friendly reminder to complete our scheduling survey for a focus group about the Jewish community in Greater Boston. As we previously mentioned, [repeat template from above].

If you are still interested, please [follow this link](#) to indicate your availability for a 75-minute Zoom focus group and provide your informed consent by X. If you are selected to participate in a group, we will confirm the date and time no later than 48 hours before the focus group.

All who do participate in a group will receive a **\$75 electronic gift card** as thanks for your time.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Best,
[Sender]

Invitation to Focus Group

Subject: You're Invited! Focus Group at [Date/Time] for \$75

Dear [First Name],

Thank you for completing the scheduling survey for a focus group about the Jewish community in Greater Boston. We are very pleased to invite you to participate in the focus group taking place on [Date/Day] at [Time]. The focus group will last for 75 minutes and will be conducted via Zoom—you can find the Zoom link below. You will also receive a Google Calendar invite with the same link shortly.

As a reminder, [repeat template from above]

To thank you for your participation, we will send you a **\$75 electronic gift card** after the focus group is conducted.

You can view our privacy policy [here](#).

Feel free to contact us with any questions. **If your availability has changed and you are no longer able to attend, please let us know as soon as possible.** Otherwise, we look forward to speaking with you on [Day of FG]!

On behalf of the research team,
[Sender]

Zoom Meeting Link:

Focus Group Reminder

Subject: Focus Group Tomorrow @ [Day/Date/Time] for \$75!

Hello [First Name],

This is a friendly reminder that you are scheduled to participate in a virtual focus group tomorrow, [Day/Date] at [Time]. You can find a Zoom link for the meeting below. We will send you a \$75 gift card once the focus group has been completed. We look forward to seeing you then!

Cheers,
[Sender]

Zoom meeting link:

Thanks Anyway Email (for those ineligible and those who were not invited to a group)

Subject: Thank you!

Dear [First Name],

Thank you very much for completing our screening and scheduling surveys for participation in a focus group about the Jewish community in Greater Boston—we are so grateful for your time and interest. Due to a large response to our request for participation, we are unable to invite you to participate in a focus group at this time.

With thanks and wishes for good health,
[Sender]

Scheduler Survey/Informed Consent

Please read the following study information carefully. If you consent to participate in the study, please click “Continue” at the bottom to proceed to a scheduling page.

Study Information

Purpose of the study

Thank you for your interest in participating in a focus group about the Boston Jewish Community. The focus group is part of a study sponsored by Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) and conducted by Rosov Consulting. The study is designed to help CJP and other Jewish community organizations better understand the Boston Jewish community and how to serve it.

What will I be asked to do?

The focus group should take approximately 75 minutes and will be conducted by Zoom. The moderator will ask questions about your experience participating in both formal and informal Jewish communities, and what you need or want from Jewish organizations.

What are my rights?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the focus group, for any reason, and without any prejudice. If you decide to participate in the focus group, you have the right not to answer any individual question or questions presented by the researchers or other participants.

What will happen to my information?

Rosov Consulting will treat the information we collect in the focus group confidentially, meaning that nothing you share will be attributed to you specifically or to other personally identifiable information in any reports and other materials prepared for CJP or for public audiences. Your words may be quoted in reports and other materials prepared for public audiences, but no personally identifiable information will be associated with them.

Since this is a group conversation, it is important to know that we cannot guarantee that others in the group will maintain the same level of confidentiality as the research team will. However, we will ask that each participant respect the privacy of other participants by treating the information they hear as confidential. This means that you may not report anything heard in the focus group to others outside the group.

The focus group will be video and audio recorded for the purposes of transcription and analysis. All information gathered in the focus group will be stored in a secure location, in accordance with the Rosov Consulting privacy policy, which you can read here: <https://www.rosovconsulting.com/privacy/>.

What are the potential benefits and risks?

All focus groups have potential benefits and risks. You may benefit by contributing to the understanding and knowledge of experiences and perspectives among those who identify as Jewish in the Greater Boston area, by being a member of a community that is better served and supported because of action taken as a result of this research, or simply by enjoying the conversation. You may experience risks associated with conversations, especially those involving issues of identity and community belonging, including: emotional or social discomfort; regret at oversharing; the oversharing of others; and disclosure of confidential information or comments by other participants. Our skilled focus group moderators seek to mitigate risks to participants should they

arise during the session. For up to 90 days after the focus group is over, if you wish to have part or all of your contributions redacted from the written transcript, you may request it by contacting Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz at lkberkowitz@rosofconsulting.com.

After you have participated in the focus group, you will receive a \$75 electronic gift card as thanks for your time.

How can I learn more about the study?

If you would like to discuss the focus group or the study it is part of further, please contact Laurence Kotler-Berkowitz at lkberkowitz@rosofconsulting.com. If at any time you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant, need information, want to provide feedback, or experience a research-related injury, please contact the USM Office of Research Integrity and Outreach at 207-780-4517 or usmorio@maine.edu. [Click here](#) for more information for participants.

How do I indicate my consent to participate?

By clicking “Continue” below and indicating times when you are available to take part in the focus group, you are providing your informed consent to participate. When the focus group convenes, the focus group moderator may seek your verbal consent once again to participate.

We are grateful for your willingness to consider contributing to this important research!

Times

Please select ALL the dates and times below when you would be available to participate in a 75-minute focus group over Zoom. If you are selected to participate, Rosov Consulting will send you an electronic calendar invitation with a Zoom link for one of the times you have indicated availability. Please **accept** the invitation to indicate your intention to participate or **decline** the invitation if you will be unable to participate. You may receive up to two email reminders before the focus group. Those who complete a focus group will be emailed an electronic gift card worth \$75, which may be used at the online retailer of your choice.

Please note that due to scheduling constraints, we may not be able to include you in a focus group. All participants who indicated availability but were not selected for a focus group will receive notification when scheduling has been completed.

Please note that all times are given in **Eastern** time. Please select all the times for which you are available below:

[Each respondent was selected for one focus group of interest. All respondents selected for a specific focus group were shown the same three to five times.]

Focus Group Guide

Welcome to our focus group and thank you for participating. My name is [Name], and I'm from Rosov Consulting. We're conducting this focus group as part of a larger study of the Boston Jewish community sponsored by Combined Jewish Philanthropies. Before we start, I want to go over a few things with all of you.

This conversation should last approximately 75 minutes, and, as noted when we reached out to about participating, it will be recorded. This recording will only be used internally at Rosov Consulting and will be saved in a secured location, so that we can safeguard your identity. I am going to start the recording now **[start recording]**.

As you know from the letter we sent you, this focus group is specifically organized for people who...

- ... identify as ... Jews of Color/LGBTQ+/Sephardic or Mizrahi
- ... have children enrolled in congregational or part-time Jewish education
- ... are in interfaith relationships ... and don't have children/and have children
- ... are connected to different types Jewish organizations/not connected to Jewish organizations and institutions now
- ... were raised in interfaith families
- ... identified either strongly or somewhat as a Zionist
- ... identified either strongly or somewhat as an anti-Zionist (or are neutral on the issue of Zionism)

Your participation in this focus group is voluntary. We hope you will participate fully in today's session, but each person is free to pass on any specific question or questions they do not want to answer, and anyone may withdraw at any time. Everything you share today is considered confidential information, which means we will not associate what you say with your name or any other personally identifying information—but we may quote your words without personally identifiable information in reports and other materials we prepare for CJP or public audiences.

This study has been approved by the University of Southern Maine Office of Research Integrity and Outreach. *[If participant has questions: If at any time you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant, need information, want to provide feedback, or experience a research-related injury, please contact the USM Office of Research Integrity and Outreach at 207-780-4517.]*

Since this is a group conversation, it is important to know that we cannot guarantee that others in the group will maintain the same level of confidentiality as the research team will. However, we ask that each participant respect the privacy of other participants by treating the information they hear as confidential. This means that you may not report anything heard in the focus group to others outside the group. If you understand and agree to this, please say yes or nod your head. **[An audible "yes" (when audio recording) or a nod of approval should be recorded from each participant.]**

Each of you previously provided informed consent when you told us the times you were available to meet. As we begin, we want to confirm your informed consent with an audible "yes" or a nod of approval. When I say your name, please indicate if you agree to participate. **[An audible "yes" (when audio recording) or a nod of approval should be recorded from each participant.]**

Ground rules

Thank you. We are now ready to move on to our conversation, and I want to spend just a moment setting the tone. First, I want to thank you for being here. It is not easy to be Jewish in today's world, much less to talk about it, and we want to make sure that everyone feels safe and comfortable. We will be talking about important matters, including matters of identity and community belonging, and I want to stress that we are only here to better understand you, your experiences, and your perspectives. Others in the group may have very different practices, perspectives, experiences, and feelings about many of the topics we discuss, and this is okay! In fact, we find this productive and encourage you to share openly about what you do, think, or feel, however similar or different it may be from others here. There are no right or wrong answers to any of our questions. We do ask, however, that you share your perspectives without judgment, criticism, or argument around what others have said. We also ask you to refrain from giving advice to one another—even when it comes from a good place, it may not always be appreciated.

Please be aware that I may need to interrupt from time to time to make sure the conversation stays on topic and on time, and that everyone is getting equal opportunity to speak.

We don't expect this to happen, but if anyone uses disrespectful or inflammatory language toward another participant, they will be removed from the focus group.

We also don't expect that anyone will experience substantial discomfort or distress from the conversation, but just in case, I'm putting information about local help lines in the chat. One is for Jewish Family and Community Services of Boston, which offers free mental health assistance during business hours Monday-Friday; and another is the Massachusetts Emergency Services Program, a 24-hour crisis helpline.

[Copy and paste the following in the Zoom chat:]

Jewish Family and Community Services of Boston
Mental Health Connect Line: 781-693-5562
Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm
<https://www.jfcsboston.org/our-services/mental-health-emotional-wellbeing>
Massachusetts Emergency Services Program: 1-877-382-1609
24 hr crisis line

IDENTITY AND CONNECTIONS

All focus groups start with this section

- 1. We want to start with some questions around Jewish identity and Jewish community. What does being Jewish mean to you personally and what aspects of being Jewish are important to you PERSONALLY? Religion, culture, community, traditions, family, friends, organizations?**
- 2. When I use the phrase "Jewish community," what does that mean to you?**
- 3. What comes to mind when you picture the Boston Jewish community in particular?**
 - a. Probe: What are one or two things you like about the Boston Jewish community?
 - b. Probe: What are one or two things you don't like about the Boston Jewish community?

DIVERSE SOCIAL GROUPS (Jews of Color/People of Color, LGBTQ+, Sephardi/Mizrachi)

Three focus groups : JOC, LGBTQ+, Sephardi/Mizrachi

Switching topics, I want to talk about your identities as [Jews of Color/LGBTQ Jews/Sephardic or Mizrahi Jews].

4. **How important is this identity to you? In what ways is it important or not important?**
5. **In what ways are you socially connected to other Jews who share your identity? How important, or unimportant, are those social connections to you?**
6. **In what ways are you connected to Jewish organizations in general? If you are, I would love to hear which organizations or types of organizations specifically, if you are willing to share. How important, or unimportant, are these organizational connections to you?**
7. **How welcome do you feel in Jewish community and organizational spaces?**
8. **Do you ever feel unwelcome or uncomfortable in a Jewish organization or in Jewish community spaces because of your identity as [a Jew/Person of Color/LGBTQ/Sephardic or Mizrahi]? If so, please tell us a little about that.**
 - a. **Probe: When you are in Jewish spaces, including organizational spaces, do you feel like you can participate authentically as your whole self, with all of your identities?**
9. **Other than issues around identities, are there other things that get in the way of your being as involved or connected to a Jewish community in Boston as you'd like to be? If so, what are they?**
10. **Does your Jewish identity ever feel in conflict with your participation or membership in other communities or groups in Boston?**
11. **Are there things you are looking for from a Jewish community in Boston and Jewish organizations that you haven't found?**
12. **Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences with Jewish community in Boston that we haven't covered, especially in relationship with your identification as [Jew of Color/LGBTQ/Sephardic or Mizrahi]?**

Interfaith

Two focus groups: interfaith respondents with children and interfaith respondents without children. Each group starts with the questions 13-18.

Switching topics, I want to talk about your experience being in an interfaith relationship.

13. **To begin, is "interfaith" a word that resonates with you to describe your relationship? Are there other words that you prefer to use that reflect the fact that one spouse/partner in your relationship is Jewish and the other is not?**

14. In what ways are you socially connected today to other Jews who are part of interfaith relationships, and if you are connected, how important are those connections to you?
15. In what ways are you connected to Jewish organizations, and if you are connected, how important are these connections to you?
16. How welcome do you and your spouse/partner feel in Jewish community and organizational spaces? Do you ever feel unwelcome or uncomfortable in Jewish spaces?
17. What are some of the things you like most about Jewish community in Boston?
- a. What are the things you like least about Jewish community in Boston?
18. Are there things you are looking for from a Jewish community in Boston and Jewish organizations that you haven't found?

For interfaith respondents with children:

19. Can you talk about your experiences raising children in an interfaith family? Do you feel like your children are fully welcomed and accepted in Jewish community and organizational spaces?
20. What kind of Jewish educational options are available to them, if any, that you are comfortable with, and what makes those options potentially attractive?
21. How important is it to you that your children have a chance to meet and know other children from interfaith families?
22. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences with Jewish community in Boston that we haven't covered, especially in relation to being a part of an interfaith family?

For interfaith respondents without children:

23. In the survey, none of you reported having children. We realize people's plans and experiences around having children, or not having children, can be very personal, so we want to keep that in mind as we talk. For those who are planning to have children or even just thinking of having children, what sorts of considerations, if any, come to mind about raising them in an interfaith family?
- a. Probe: Concerns about being welcomed in Jewish spaces and Jewish organizations?
- b. Probe: Concerns about which religious or cultural traditions your family will follow, or how your family will balance different traditions?
- c. Probe: Concerns about expectations from or tensions with extended family members?

24. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences with Jewish community in Boston that we haven't covered, especially in relation to being a part of an interfaith family?

Raised Interfaith

One focus group: respondents raised in interfaith families

Switching topics, I want to talk about your experiences growing up in an interfaith family.

25. How aware were you that one of your parents was Jewish and the other wasn't? In what ways, if any, was this an important factor in your family's life?

26. In what ways was your family connected to Jewish life and Jewish community, on the one hand, and other religious or ethnic traditions, on the other?

- a. Where, if at all, did your family celebrate Jewish holidays and with whom? Did Jewish holiday celebrations include the non-Jewish side of your family?
- b. In what ways was your family socially connected to other Jews, and, if you were connected, how important were those connections to your family?
- c. In what ways was your family connected to Jewish organizations, and, if you were connected, how important were these connections to you?

27. Growing up, did you and your family feel welcomed in Jewish community and organizational spaces?

28. What kinds of Jewish educational experiences did you have when you were growing up?

- a. What role did those experiences play in your life, both personally and in terms of your family?

29. How have your experiences growing up in an interfaith family affected your Jewish identity as an adult?

- a. Has your Jewish identity changed in any way as an adult?

30. How have your experiences growing up in an interfaith family affected the way you have connected to Jewish community and Jewish organizations as an adult?

- a. Have your connections to Jewish community and organization as an adult changed over time? If so, in what ways, and why?

31. How have your experiences growing up in an interfaith family affected your own perspectives on what it means to be a Jewish family?

- a. For those of you who may have children, how did your experience growing up in an interfaith family affect your perspectives on raising children?
- b. For those of you who may be thinking of having children in the future, does your experience growing up in an interfaith family affect how you might want to raise your own children?

- 32. How welcome do you feel in Jewish communities in the Boston area today?**
- 33. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences with Jewish community in Boston that we haven't covered, especially related to being raised in an interfaith family?**

JEWISH EDUCATION – CHILDREN

One focus group: respondents with children who are in part-time Jewish educational program

- 34. I want to start talking about your children's Jewish education. All of you indicated that you have children enrolled in part-time Jewish education like a religious or Hebrew school. Why did you make the decision to enroll your children in this kind of program?**
- 35. What have your children's experiences been like in their part-time schools?**
- 36. What do you like about the part-time schools your children are enrolled in, and what do you dislike?**
- 37. More broadly, are your children involved in other types of Jewish education and participation—Jewish summer camps, youth groups, travel to Israel? What have been their experiences in those programs?**
- 38. Are there things you are looking for in terms of Jewish educational options for your children that you haven't found in the Boston Jewish community?**
- 39. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences with Jewish community in Boston that we haven't covered?**

INSTITUTIONAL/ORGANIZATIONAL CONNECTIONS

One focus group: respondents who are members of or participants in Jewish organizations.

I want to start talking about your connections to Jewish organizations. All of you indicated on the survey that you are members of or participants in Jewish organizations. There is sure to be a lot of variability among you in terms of what organizations you are connected to, and in what ways. I want to pause to remind everyone that we are not here to judge one another; only to listen and learn, with curiosity. Please also remember you are free to pass on any question; to take a break; or to stop participating if you wish.

- 40. Can you speak about why you join or participate in Jewish organizations? What do you find valuable about it?**
- 41. For some people, organizational participation is a primary way of connecting to Jewish life, and for others it is one of many ways. How would you describe the importance of Jewish organizations to you relative to other ways of engaging in Jewish life?**
- 42. How do you make decisions about which Jewish organizations to join or participate in?**

- 43. What have been some of your most meaningful experiences as a member of or participant in Jewish organizations?**
- 44. In what ways have you taken leadership positions in Jewish organizations? What have your experiences been like doing that?**
- a. Probe: If they haven't taken leadership positions, why not? What are the barriers to taking leadership positions?
- 45. Describe any disappointing experiences you might have had in Jewish organizations.**
- 46. Are there ways that you think Jewish organizations can do a better job at serving the needs of people like you? Are there things you are looking for from Jewish organizations that you have not yet found?**
- 47. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences with Jewish community in Boston that we haven't covered?**

NOT ORGANIZATIONALLY/INSTITUTIONALLY AFFILIATED

One focus group: respondents who are not members of or regular participants in Jewish organizations.

48. I want to start talking about Jewish organizations and institutions. All of you indicated in the survey that you are not currently members of or regular participants in Jewish organizations. And so I want to start off by asking you why? What are some of the reasons why you are not connected to Jewish organizations at this stage of your life?
49. Have you been members of or participants in Jewish organizations in the past? If not, why not? If yes, what were those experiences like for you?
50. What might make joining or participating in a Jewish organization attractive or interesting to you? What might you be looking for from Jewish organizations that they could provide?
51. Looking forward, do you see a stage in your life when you might consider joining or participating in Jewish organizations?
52. Are there are other ways in which you connect to Jewish life and community outside of Jewish organizations? How would you describe those experiences?
53. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences with Jewish community in Boston that we haven't covered?

ISRAEL – Respondents Who Identify As Zionists

One focus group: respondents who strongly or somewhat agree with the statement: "I consider myself to be a Zionist."

Switching topics, I want to talk about Israel. Before we start, we want to acknowledge that Israel can be a controversial topic in the American Jewish community today, with lots of different opinions—and shades of opinion—and it can generate some pretty strong emotions. I also want to acknowledge [most recent developments/tensions around Israel, Iran, or other relevant topics], which is causing many people additional stress. So, I want to ask that we maintain respect for each other's perspectives. Please keep in mind that we are not here to debate or adjudicate different points of view. Rather, we are here to listen and learn, with curiosity rather than judgment. Thanks.

54. To begin, I would like to do a quick whip around and have everyone offer a few words that describe how they feel about Israel right now.
55. As I mentioned earlier, all of you in this group indicated on your survey that you think of yourself as Zionists, either strongly or at least somewhat. I'd love to hear from anyone in the group who is willing to share what means to them to be a Zionist.
 - a. Do you think you can be a Zionist and also criticize Israeli governments or parts of Israeli society? If so, where and when is it acceptable to offer criticism?

56. How often, if at all, do you share with others your feelings about Israel? And who are those others you share them with?

- a. Probe: How confident or comfortable do you feel discussing Israel with others?

57. Are there Jewish and/or non-Jewish spaces in Greater Boston where you purposefully do not share your views about Israel and if so, why?

58. I'm curious to know if anyone in this group has had conflict or tension with family and friends because of your views on Israel. If so, can you share what happened and how the conflict/tension has affected you?

59. As you may know, there are some members of the Jewish community who take an anti-Zionist position, that is, they argue that that Israel does not have a right to exist as the nation-state of the Jewish people. How do you feel and react when you hear that argument?

- a. How do you feel and react when you hear non-Jewish critics of Israel take an anti-Zionist position? Is it different than when the critics are other Jews?
- b. In your view, what is the relationship between anti-Zionism and antisemitism? Is anti-Zionism a form of antisemitism? Or can they be separated from each other?

60. As you may know, many if not most organizations in the Boston Jewish community hold pro-Israel and Zionist views. What obligation do you think those organizations have to recognize and make space for other voices in the Jewish community that are less pro-Israel or even anti-Zionist?

- a. Probe: What role, if any, do you think Jewish organizations should have in trying to address conflict within the Jewish community about Israel?
- b. Probe: How open would you be to engaging in conversations with anti-Zionists if organizations facilitated those conversations?

61. What role, if any, do you think Jewish organizations have in defending Israel against critics, especially anti-Zionists, from outside the community?

ISRAEL – Respondents Who Identify As Anti-Zionists Or Neutral On Zionism

One focus group: respondents who strongly or somewhat agree with the statement: "I consider myself to be an anti-Zionist."

Switching topics, I want to talk about Israel. Before we start, we want to acknowledge that Israel can be a controversial topic in the American Jewish community today, with lots of different opinions—and shades of opinion—and it can generate some pretty strong emotions. I also want to acknowledge [most recent developments/tensions around Israel, Iran, or other relevant topics], which is causing many people additional stress. So I want to ask that we maintain respect for each other's perspectives. Please keep in mind that we are not here to debate or adjudicate different points of view. Rather, we are here to listen and learn, with curiosity rather than judgment. Thanks.

62. To begin, I would like to do a quick whip around and have everyone offer a few words that describe how you feel about Israel right now.

- 63. As I mentioned earlier, all of you in this group indicated on your survey that you think of yourself as anti-Zionists (or are neutral on the question of Zionism). I'd love to hear from anyone in the group who is willing to share what it means to them to be an anti-Zionist.**
- a. Probe, if necessary: For you, is being an anti-Zionist different than criticizing the government or society while still accepting Israel's right to exist?
- 64. Some people think of themselves as post-nationalists who don't believe in nation-states, including a Jewish nation-state. Does that idea and label resonate with anyone in this group?**
- 65. How often, if at all, do you share with others your feelings about Israel? And who are those others you share them with?**
- 66. How do your views on Israel affect your feelings of belonging in the Greater Boston Jewish community?**
- a. Are there Jewish spaces in Greater Boston where you feel you can and do share your views about Israel?
 - b. Are there Jewish spaces in Greater Boston where you purposefully do not share your views about Israel, and if so, why?
- 67. I'm curious to know if anyone in this group has had conflict or tension with family and friends because of your views on Israel? If so, can you share what happened and how the conflict/tension has affected you?**
- 68. How do you feel and react when you hear Jewish supporters of Israel say Jews have a right to their own state and a right to defend it militarily?**
- a. Probe: How do you feel when you hear non-Jewish supporters of Israel say those same things? Is it different that when the supporters are other Jews?
- 69. As you may know, some members of the Jewish community argue that anti-Zionism is a form of antisemitism. How do you feel when you hear that argument? From your perspective, what is the relationship between anti-Zionism and antisemitism?**
- 70. As you may know, many, if not most organizations in the Boston Jewish community hold pro-Israel and Zionist views. What is your expectation of those organizations to recognize and open space in the community for voices like yours who have different views?**
- a. Probe: What role, if any, do you think Jewish organizations should have in trying to address conflict within the Jewish community about Israel?
 - b. Probe: How open would you be to engaging in conversations with anti-Zionists if organizations facilitated those conversations?
- 71. I want to finish with a final whip around for the group Can you tell me if there's one thing you wish other Jews and Jewish organization understood about your views on Israel, what would it be?**

Thank you all so much for your time and all that you shared today. We will follow up in the next couple weeks with the gift card we've promised as thanks for your time today. That will arrive by email. Please reach out if you have any further questions.



Questions?

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