



ISRAEL SUMMIT
AT HARVARD
organized by Harvard Students

6 STEPS TO CREATE AN ISRAEL SUMMIT ON YOUR CAMPUS

Here are some very brief strategies and lessons we learned from the Israel Summit at Harvard 2018. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us at info@israelsummitharvard.com.

We want to help in any way possible!

START

1

TEAM



First and foremost, you are going to need a team around you to put together a summit. It's important to have a diverse group of students representing different ethnic backgrounds and political viewpoints.

ACTION

Reach out to different people around campus, talk to friends of friends, and begin developing a group of people around you that are dedicated to and excited about the mission. In some cases, sheer passion can be more important than experience or knowledge of the topic.

WHAT WE LEARNED

If your team is comprised of students from different friend circles, age groups, and backgrounds, you will not only have a more thorough and thoughtful program but also an easier time doing outreach for the event.

2

CONTENT



Whether you decide to focus on politics, culture, technology, another topic, or some combination of it all, make sure to have a varied and engaging set of speakers.

ACTION

You can reach out to speakers through student organizations on campus, through organizations like Jewish National Fund that have a Speakers Bureau, through friends of friends of friends, or really however you can get to them. Be prepared for a lot of no's but definitely don't be discouraged (we received over 40 no's in the process). Don't be afraid to ask people for help.

WHAT WE LEARNED

Our team believed there was an abundance of political events but a lack of events that highlighted the Israeli spirit and impact on the world. We wanted to inspire our audience by talking about Israel in a new way, and that's why we chose to invite a unique group of speakers that rarely attend Israel events on campus.

FAIR



Another crucial aspect of our summit was the israel career and special opportunities fair where students could engage with representatives from top israeli companies and discover a multitude of trips to israel for people of all backgrounds. This is certainly not essential to planning a summit on your campus but is definitely a great way to draw more people and have a lasting impact by potentially leading to jobs and life-changing trips.

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ACTION

We recommend partnering with Start-Up Nation Technology Fair, an organization dedicated to sourcing and coordinating Israeli companies for fairs across the country. You should also try to partner with your school's office of career services as they can help reach out to companies and publicize your fair and summit. If you want to bring in organizations that provide trips and fellowships in Israel, you can work with your Hillel to reach out. Most organizations are willing and excited to do on-campus recruiting for their programming.

WHAT WE LEARNED

Do not underestimate the time commitment in planning a successful fair, as this could be a whole months long project on its own. You should also expect to get a lot of rejections from companies in planning a fair, but we found the fair to be very attractive to potential attendees and rewarding to those in attendance. It's a great way to showcase Israeli technology in a concrete, meaningful setting.

EXECUTION



Plan ahead. In order for the summit to run seamlessly, it is important to have a dedicated team member organizing logistics

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ACTION

Make sure you reserve a place to hold the summit early in the planning process (it may be more difficult than you think, and it's obviously crucial to have a location confirmed before you secure speakers and sponsors).

WHAT WE LEARNED

We held our Summit at an off-campus hotel because there were no spaces on campus that were available and fit our needs, but looking back, it probably would've been better to do it somewhere on-campus. Off-campus sites can be more expensive and can be a major deterrent for students who might not be familiar with the setting.

FUNDRAISE



Fundraising is similar to the chicken or the egg dilemma in that most donors won't give money until you have speakers but many speakers will want to see that you've raised money before they commit to attending. It definitely makes it much easier to raise money if you've secured a couple great speakers to plan the Summit around.

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ACTION

It is probably best to begin with your campus Hillel or other on-campus Jewish organizations as they can be a great resource for support and can also help introduce you to other prospective sponsors. Depending on whether you will be creating a new student group or building on a strong foundation, you may already have connections to donors or foundations so make sure to utilize those relationships. It is crucial that you have secured a place to receive tax-deductible donations; you can partner with your Hillel or other on-campus groups to serve as a financial intermediary.

ATTENDANCE



As amazing as your summit may be, no one is going to come unless you do thorough outreach and marketing. The two main components are student organizational co-sponsors and print/digital marketing.

6

WHAT WE LEARNED

You need to be creative with your fundraising. Apply for on-campus or online grants. Ask for help from peers, campus professionals, and other trusted advisors. Don't be afraid to cold-email or cold-call foundations or individuals. And lastly, don't be deterred by an initial "no," as we had multiple donors who initially were not interested in supporting, but as they program developed, ending up becoming some of our largest fiscal sponsors.

ACTION

It is absolutely essential to have other student organizations sponsor your summit because it will help you directly reach lots of students but will also illustrate that there is a coalition behind your mission. If you can, form partnerships with groups that have no Jewish or Israel affiliation. Every club is self-interested in some respects, so if you offer them a special opportunity at the summit they are much more likely to sponsor. For example, if you have a great tech/business speaker, reach out to the tech/business clubs and offer them a chance to have a private breakout session. On a different note, you may also want to create a group of ambassadors who are moderately involved in the planning and are thus more inclined to help bring friends and friends of friends to the summit.

WHAT WE LEARNED

In terms of print media (posters, fliers, signs, etc), we believe it was not particularly effective in actually generating RSVPs but very helpful in getting the summit on the general campus conscience. We found Facebook Ads to be a crucial part of our marketing efforts, and we actually generated over 40% of our RSVPs through a series of ad campaigns. Through your summit Facebook page, you can create advertisements that are targeted to people within a certain age range, geographic location, and interest.

FINISH

College is a time when people learn and ultimately cement many of their beliefs. You can have a truly life-changing impact on students through your summit. Again, please feel free to reach out to us at info@israelsummitharvard.com with any questions. Best of luck!