



Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi

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A corporation under the Law of Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi (1969)

is offering scholarships for research on the topic:

Groups around the world with affinities to the Jewish People

1. Background

1.1 Besides established and recognized Jewish communities, there have always been other groups with certain affinities to Israel and the Jewish People. Among these groups were some that departed from the Jewish People whether willingly or forcibly and others that sought to join it willingly.

1.2 Until the establishment of the State of Israel, this was a relatively marginal phenomenon, but in the last decades it has increased and become more visible. The "Bnei Anusim" in Majorca and Belmonte, the "Red" Anusim from Eastern Europe, Bnei Menashe in India, the Lemba in South Africa are a few examples from an increasing number of groups, who feel close to the Jewish People and the State of Israel and identify with them.

1.3 The second president of the State of Israel, Izhak Ben-Zvi, was invested in this subject, he studied it and was in contact with some of these communities. Nevertheless, to date the research on this subject has been only minimal, so that information regarding these communities is still sparse, and in some cases insufficiently supported. Broad-ranged study and reliable research are called for, to establish a clearer picture regarding these groups, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

1.4 In order to encourage research in this field, the Center for Study of the Dispersed of Israel (below: the Center) was established in 2024





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within the Ben-Zvi Institute for the Study of Jewish Communities in the East.

1.5 The Center will grant in 2025 up to 10 scholarships of up to 40,000 NIS each, to researchers, who will devote time to a study that will map the groups and communities with affinity to the Jewish people in one country (or in part of it, if it is a large country with many such groups), with the intention to publish an article or a research document, detailing the findings and conclusions of their study.

1.6 Each study will be comprehensive and will include a detailed description of groups and communities (if the latter exist) with affinities to the Jewish people, in the country chosen for research, detailing the geographical distribution in various towns and cities (and if necessary, within a city). The research will gather quantitative and qualitative data about the groups, their characteristics and their communal activities (if such exist), by a combination of field visits, conversations with members of these groups and extant secondary literature.

1.7 The study will be completed within a year from the time of approval of the research proposal by the Center. In special cases one extension period of up to six months, may be granted, for completion of the research.

2. Conditions for submitting scholarship applications

Applicants must fulfill the following conditions:

2.1 The applicant has an M.A. or higher degree from a recognized institution of higher learning in Israel or abroad, in one of the following areas: history, anthropology, sociology, comparative religion, and/or related areas of study.

3. Submission of applications





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3.1 Applications for the scholarship will be submitted by the apposite form, titled "Scholarships for research of groups around the world with affinities to the Jewish People" found at the website of Yad Ben Zvi - <https://ybz.org.il>

3.2 The form details all documents and information necessary for submitting an application.

3.3 The form should be submitted no later than September 17, 2025

3.4 For further information, please contact Ms. Shuli Serero, at mbz@ybz.org.il

4. Selecting research proposals

4.1 Research proposals will be evaluated by a committee consisting of researchers and public figures (below: "the committee").

4.2 The committee is entitled to disqualify incomplete proposals, or to request supplementary materials. The committee will consider only complete applications.

4.3 The committee has full discretion regarding its choosing between proposals submitted, including considering the experience of the applicant, the originality, importance or expected impact of the proposed research, etc.

4.4 The committee will select the proposals that it regards as worthy of receiving funding and may approve fewer than ten proposals.

4.5 The list of scholarship recipients will be published on November 2, 2025.

4.6 The scholarships will be awarded at a ceremony to be conducted at Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi in Jerusalem.

4.7 Recipients will sign an agreement with Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, detailing the conditions for receiving the scholarship.





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4.8 The scholarship will be paid in two installments:

4.8.1 First installment – an advance of half of the scholarship funds, up to 20,000 NIS – within 30 days from approval of the proposal.

4.8.2 Second installment – the remaining half of up to 20,000 NIS – within 30 days of approval of the complete research document submitted.

5. The research

5.1 After approval of proposals, recipients will participate in a dedicated preparatory workshop organized by Yad Ben Zvi, and will detail a research protocol to be approved by the Center.

5.2 In the course of their research, the recipients can consult the Center's Scholarships Academic Advisor, regarding practical or academic aspects of their study, and he may refer them to specialists pertinent to issues concerning the research.

5.3 The recipients will submit a progress report six months after the beginning of their research. In cases when an extension is granted, another report will be submitted one year after the beginning of their research. Failure to submit a report or submission of an insufficient report could lead to cancellation of the scholarship.

5.4 After handing in their research, scholarship recipients will present it at a dedicated evening, to be held at Yad Ben Zvi.

5.5 The Institute maintains the right of first refusal regarding publication of the research paper submitted by scholarship recipients.

To submit candidacy for the scholarship, you must click on the following link: <https://ybz.org.il/scholarship/groups-with-affinities>

