 

**AN INVITATION TO APPLY TO THE**

**USCJ RUDERMAN INCLUSION ACTION COMMUNITY**

USCJ is pleased to invite you to apply to participate in the USCJ Ruderman Inclusion Action Community, an initiative to transform Conservative congregations into truly inclusive communities for people with disabilities.

This effort will help you to consider every aspect of community – physical facilities, [education programs](http://uscj.org/JewishLivingandLearning/InclusionInitiative.aspx), *tefillah*, social activities and the very attitudes of congregants and leaders – to create a comprehensive blueprint for change to fully allow people with disabilities and their families to participate comfortably in congregational life.

The application form is below - completed applications should be sent by email to inclusion@uscj.org by 4:00 p.m. ET, Thursday, **December 22, 2016**. The program will begin with online webinars in January and February, and a gathering of the USCJ Ruderman Inclusion Action Community will take place in person March 19 - 20, 2017 in the New York City area.

A fact sheet is included below outlining the program and guidance that your *kehilla* would receive in this process and what would be expected of your *kehilla* as a participant in the USCJ Ruderman Inclusion Action Community. If you have questions about this application or about the program, please contact Ed Frim, USCJ’s Inclusion Specialist, at inclusion@uscj.org or at 412-951-5415.

We look forward to learning together, and to helping you nurture your *kehilla* to fully develop into a truly inclusive community.

L’Shalom,

***Susan Wyner Ed Frim***

***Director of Learning Enrichment Ruderman Inclusion Specialist***

 

**FACT SHEET**

**WHAT IS THE USCJ RUDERMAN INCLUSION ACTION COMMUNITY?**

A community of up to twenty congregations who receive consultation and guidance from USCJ to develop and implement a vision and action plan for making their *kehilla* a more inclusive congregation.

**WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR PARTICIPATION?**

* Applications for participation are due by 4:00 p.m. ET on Thursday, December 22, 2016. The selection of the participating *kehillot* will be completed and congregations notified by January 6, 2017.
* The program will begin in January with a conference call/webinar with representatives of participating *kehillot.* A gathering of representatives of all participating *kehillot* is planned for March 19-20, 2017 in New York City.There will be additional webinars and regional gatherings in the spring.
* Local work will continue in each *kehilla* through September 2017.
* Representatives of each participating *kehilla* will have the opportunity to participate in a forum in fall of 2017, where the successes and work of participating *kehillot* will be highlighted.

**WHAT WILL *KEHILLA* RECEIVE AS A PARTICIPANT?**

If selected, *kehilla* will receive tools, training and coaching designed to enable the development of a more inclusive community. These supports include, but are not limited to:

* Guidance to conduct and analyze introductory assessments
* Coaching in developing an action plan and piloting and/or enhancing/expanding programs
* Site visit and consultation by USCJ’s Inclusion Specialist Ed Frim
* Participation in our ListServe and Facebook group, including more than 50 congregations in 2017
* The opportunity to reflect on data at the conclusion of the program with coaches and experts
* A higher profile locally and nationally that will lead to new and more deeply engaged members

**WHAT COMMITMENT MUST A *KEHILLA* MAKE TO PARTICIPATE?**

* Appoint a liaison to the cohort who will stay in communication with the USCJ Inclusion Specialist
* Form an Inclusion committee if one does not currently exist. If one does exist, ensure that it includes other key leaders in your *kehilla*. You should plan on meeting at least once a month during this effort.
* Conduct an assessment of current inclusion practices at your congregation
* Engage key professional and lay leaders in the work of inclusion, who will attend cohort trainings and work on an ongoing basis to develop and implement a vision and action plan
* Create an Inclusion Action Plan for your *kehilla*
* Engage a team from the *kehilla* to participate in the March gathering and the fall forum
* Provide data and narrative as part of a final evaluation
* Demonstrate a long-term commitment to continue building a more inclusive community
* Address disabilities inclusion by Rabbi at least two times a year from the pulpit
* Share congregational efforts related to inclusion, including acknowledgement of USCJ and The Ruderman Family Foundation, with all members at least quarterly through your newsletter or some other means

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| http://uscj.org/Objects/Images/USCJLogoHoriz_color.gif | http://uscj.org/Objects/Images/ruderman-logo-in-partnership-with.jpg |

## USCJ RUDERMAN INCLUSION ACTION COMMUNITY APPLICATION

## Contact Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Kehilla | Click here to enter text. |
| City/State | Click here to enter text. |
| Name of Person Completing this Application | Click here to enter text. |
| Phone | Click here to enter text. |
| Name of Rabbi | Click here to enter text. |
| Rabbi Email Address | Click here to enter text. |
| Name of Board President | Click here to enter text. |
| President Email Address | Click here to enter text. |

## Information About Your Kehilla Membership (numbers may be approximate)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| # of Membership Units | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Single Adults under 65 | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Families with Young Children | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Families with School Age Children | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Families with Grown Children/Parents under 65 | Click here to enter text. |
| # Adults Age 65 and Over | Click here to enter text. |

## Information About People with Disabilities in Your Kehilla

***You may not know some of this – if so, take your best guess and note it is an estimate***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total Children in Early Childhood Program | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Children in Early Childhood Program with a Disability | Click here to enter text. |
| Total Children in Religious School | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Children in Religious School with a Disability | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Families requiring accommodations due to Disabilities to participate in Services and Programs | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Members who are Blind/Visually Impaired | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Members who are Hearing Impaired/Deaf | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Members with a Physical Disability | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Members with Developmental/Intellectual Disability (e.g. Autism, Downs Syndrome, etc.) | Click here to enter text. |
| # of Members with a Mental Health related disability | Click here to enter text. |

1. Do you believe your physical facility is fully accessible for those with disabilities? If not, please provide a brief explanation:

Click here to enter text.

1. What goals are you seeking to achieve to make your *kehilla* more inclusive of people with disabilities and what are you currently doing, or have done in the past five years to achieve that vision? What barriers and challenges have you faced? (Limit 200 words)

Click here to enter text.

1. Why are you interested in participating in the USCJ Ruderman Inclusion Action Community? What do you hope to gain? (Limit 100 words)

Click here to enter text.

1. How are professional and volunteer leadership engaged with issues of inclusion in your *kehilla?* Is there an Inclusion committee? Who will form the core of leaders dedicated to this initiative?

Click here to enter text.

1. Is your congregation addressing any major issues or experiencing significant transitions at this time (e.g. Rabbinic search, Executive Director search, financial issues, merger, other major planning efforts, etc.)?

Click here to enter text.

1. Each *kehilla* that participates in the USCJ Ruderman Inclusion Action Community will be represented by a team including at least one senior staff member (rabbi, cantor, executive director, education director, etc.) and one lay leader (board member, committee chair, etc.) **Participation in the national gathering on March 19-20, 2017 in NYC is a required element of the program.** Can your congregation make this commitment? If this is a difficulty, please indicate the nature of the challenge, and/or contact Ed Frim, USCJ Inclusion Specialist, to discuss.

Click here to enter text.

**If there is anything else you feel we should know, feel free to attach an additional page.**

## Please Identify the Lead Professional and the Lead Lay Leader who will participate in the USCJ Ruderman Inclusion Action Community national gathering and webinars from your kehilla.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Professional/Clergy | Click here to enter text. |
| Title of Professional/Clergy | Click here to enter text. |
| Email Address | Click here to enter text. |
| Phone Number | Click here to enter text. |
|   |  |
| Name of Lay Leader | Click here to enter text. |
| Title of Lay Leader | Click here to enter text. |
| Email Address | Click here to enter text. |
| Phone Number | Click here to enter text. |

**EMAIL YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:**

**INCLUSION@USCJ.ORG**