

TSADIK's Palestinian-Israeli Fellowship Program

A fellowship is awarded annually by the Tsadik Foundation (www.tsadik.org) to three Palestinian-Israelis for their leadership role in one of three respective sectors : strengthening civil society, economic development, and arts & culture.

Program Goal :

To develop leadership and support role models in the Palestinian-Israeli community, to create more equal opportunities for Palestinians and Jews in Israel, and improve the integration of the Palestinian minority into the broader economic and social fabric of the country.

Organization:

Tsadik conducts the program with partners, individuals or organizations involved in one of the three fellowship sectors; Each year, Tsadik's partners nominate one candidate (excluding a member of a partner organization's staff) who submits a brief description of a project he/she wishes to be supported by the award (typically \$10,000), together with a recommendation letter by the partner. A Tsadik-constituted jury then selects a laureate fellow among the candidates in each of the three sectors.

Selection criteria:

Candidates must be Palestinian Israeli citizens and full-time residents of Israel, speak Hebrew and Arabic (English optional but preferred); key selection criteria are:

- Candidate's accomplishments in the relevant fellowship sector
- Role model characteristics with a strong personal vision that can inspire others
- Project's strength and candidate's commitment to social progress and pluralistic values

TSADIK / NIF (*) fellows - Strengthening civil society

(*) a collaboration with the [New Israel Fund](#)



Fidaa Naara Abu Dbai (2009 fellow) has been a social activist in the city of Nazareth, in the Triangle, and in Arab society in general, since 1996. Fidaa volunteered at the Hotline for Victims of Violence and Sexual Abuse that serves Arab women, and accompanied and supported women and girls who were victims of violence and sexual abuse. Fidaa served as the Programs Coordinator at [Women Against Violence](#) (WAV) in 2000 and in 2007 when she directed WAV's Unit for Social Change. This unit ran a number of projects including an educational and awareness-raising project on gender equality for teenagers, an employment project in collaboration with men, women's empowerment groups, social activists' empowerment groups and a forum of women's groups. Fidaa completed her B.A. in Social Work at Tel Hai in 1999, her certification in group facilitation at Haifa University in 2003, and Shatil's social organizers' course in 2008.

With the support of the Tsadik Fellowship, Fidaa Naara aimed to create and develop for the first time a group of women leaders in Taibe. Fidaa framed the activities around issues related to domestic violence and women rights, which are not spoken about openly in Arab society. The growth process that the women went through enabled them to address additional issues and to adopt a central role in their community. Among the activities, a core group of seven women organized a public event on International Women's, 55 women (and 2 men) attended the event. Among the participants, 12 women were recruited by Fidaa to join a 65-hour leadership training course focused on gender status in Arab society, women in decision making roles and more.



Rawan Abbas (2010 fellow) is a student of Communications at Emeq Izrael College. Last year, she participated in a 28- hour course that the [I'lam Media Center for Arab Palestinians in Israel](#) conducted on "Critical Media Consumption and Action for Palestinian Arab Youth and Journalists in Israel: Toward Effecting Social Change", in which she learned media ethics and practice with some of the best

professional journalists across the country. She also volunteered in I'lam's 'Monitoring Project' where she monitored and analyzed media data. Rawan has experience in filmmaking and filming in a studio, as she was one of the film crew of the 'Aravision' song contest. She also co-filmed many episodes in a 'Keshet' production called 'Sar Lazem Nihki' ('It's Important that We Talk'). In addition to her filmmaking and media background, Rawan also has extensive experience in working with underprivileged children in the framework of a daycare program in Nazareth.

The Project "the Young Journalist" is being run by Rawan Abbas with the guidance of I'lam and the cooperation of the Municipality of Nazareth. Implementing the bottom-up strategy for creating change, the project educates children and youth. Specifically the project aims to build the capacities of children and youth in media and journalism as a tool to develop self-expression and self-confidence. This project targets children and youth whose parents suffer from drug and/or alcohol abuse and aims to help these young people escape from their family's cycle of violence and abuse by giving them a voice. This project is especially important due to the lack of programs and activities that target youth and media within the Palestinian community in Israel. Rawan and I'lam hope, through this project, to prove that self-expression and communication will foster positive change in the psychological and social status of the participating children and youth in this project, a change that will impact on their families and surrounding.



Eshraq Hajo (2011 fellow) , born in 1987, is originally from Deir Hanna in the north, and has been living in Tel Aviv-Jaffa for the last few years. She is now completing her studies for an elementary school teaching certification in the Peace, Social Justice and Sustainable Environment Program at the Kibbutzim College in Tel Aviv. Since graduating from high school in 2005, Eshraq has been active as a volunteer at a number of organizations, including Alon, a national organization for social change. As a volunteer, she has filled various roles including mentoring children individually or in groups at a school, and initiating and developing community and social activities, and more. Throughout this process, Eshraq actively participated in a number of courses and trainings in social, economic and political fields in various organizations.

The [Hirakuna Forum](#) promotes volunteering and young leadership in Palestinian society in Israel. Eshraq is now launching the Hirakuna - Alumni Club to create a network of Palestinian activists among organizations that participate in the Hirakuna Forum. The main goals of this project are to create a national network of young Palestinians from different locales who will facilitate and encourage a wide range of joint activity, and to create synergy between diverse activists and their activities. The expected outcomes include active involvement of the alumni in shaping Hirakuna's plans and activities; participation in leading Hirakuna's community-based and social activities; and planning and creating frameworks in which alumni will be involved including promoting the program and fundraising to ensure the Forum's sustainability.



Heba Amara (2012 fellow), was born in 1986; she received a BA in Sociology and Gender and Women Studies from Tel-Aviv University. She worked as a group facilitator in several Israeli-Palestinian organizations, including Women Against Violence and Jama'ah, and is a coordinator of the "Families Apart" project at Shatil.

A silent humanitarian crisis touches as many as 30,000 Palestinian families in Israel that are affected by a ban on family unification, impacting families that are divided between Israel and the occupied Territories. Their humanitarian and social strife particularly impacts children and women who struggle to support their families in the absence of a husband/father. Many of these children are socially excluded with high levels of frustration and low self esteem and achievements at school, in some villages they compose over 50% of the children in special education programs. Many such families live in the Triangle region, a geographic strip adjacent to the Green Line that is home to almost one quarter of Israel's Palestinian citizens living in twenty rural villages and five towns.

The "**Cactus Children**" project, hosted by Jama'ah community empowerment program, aims to build supporting social and educational opportunities for affected children 18 years or younger in the Triangle region. In order to raise awareness on this issue, project participants will approach 10 local authorities, hold school workshops (hoping to reach 10 principals and 250 teachers), and recruit volunteering students to work with the children and include them in various project activities.

TSADIK / IVN(*) fellows - Economic Development

(*) a collaboration with [Israel Venture Network](#)



Fadi Elobra (2011 fellow), 28 year old, is from Rahat, the largest Bedouin settlement in Israel and one of the poorest cities in Israel. As an Arab Bedouin living in Rahat, Fadi did not find it easy to attain the university education he craved. There were very few educational opportunities in his impoverished native city, and his parents had to send him away to get a good education. Because his first language was not Hebrew, he was competing at a disadvantage to other Israeli students in university entrance exams. However, Fadi triumphed against the odds and, in 2005, was able to gain a place at Ben Gurion University to study civil engineering

Fadi became determined to help other young Arab Bedouins overcome the challenges he had faced, and decided to set up a learning center. Once again, he faced an uphill struggle starting his enterprise. It took him five years to establish the school, during which time he worked hard in temporary, unskilled labor and was forced to move back into his parents' home to save money. Furthermore, his business idea was initially greeted with skepticism in the closed society of Rahat. However, Fadi succeeded and set up Duroos Learning Center in 2008 to bridge the gap between what was available and what should be available to all children and adults everywhere. The center teaches students from age 3 to adulthood, offering English (Helen Doron method) and mathematics courses as well as help with matriculation examinations (bagruts) and preparation for university entrance exams. Unlike most of the prep courses in Israel, these courses are taught in Arabic.

Fadi is a personal example of determination for his community, his achievement demonstrates to the children of Rahat that they need only to believe in themselves and be determined to realize their dream. Fadi's main hope is that the education Duroos provides, coupled with his entrepreneurial example, will go on to inspire future generations of young people.



Safa Younes (2012 fellow), is currently in her second year of studies toward her MBA. Previously she studied social work and is a licensed social worker with a BSW and MSW from Tel Aviv University. She has also trained and certified in personal and group coaching as well as vocational coaching. Safa is the founder and manager of *Arous El-Bahar for the Women of Jaffa*, a non-profit organization operating projects in order to financially empower women and to increase their involvement in community life of Jaffa and the public sphere in general.

Since 2007, Safa has established a number of social business initiatives within her non-profit organization to promote economic development in the form of skilled and respectable employment for the women in Jaffa. Some of these initiatives include JAFFADOLLS where women over the age of 45, who have a slim chance of integrating into the labor market, sew designer dolls which are sold in 19 stores across Israel; and Experiential Spoken Arabic Courses where Arab women from the community offer experiential courses to the public in spoken Arabic as well as Arabic culture. Recently, Safa identified the fact that women who lack proper skills are having difficulty finding catering jobs, despite the large number of related businesses. In order to lead a change in this field, she decided to initiate a vocational incubator for women in the sector of catering. The initiative will establish a fully equipped professional kitchen which will enable 10-15 women to work simultaneously and learn about the catering business. The women will work in the mornings to supply schools in the area with hot meals for state sponsored lunches and, in the afternoon hours, the women entrepreneurs will be able to use the kitchen for their own catering businesses, either private or with businesses in the area.



Ahmad Hassan Jurban (2013 fellow) was born in 1969, and lives in Jisr a-Zarka. It is one of the poorest towns in Israel, with few work opportunities available. However, as a trained qualified electrician, Ahmad has managed to earn his living in Jisr since the age of 18 through his own initiatives, setting a positive example in his community. As a child, Ahmad felt that Jisr was a lonely island, isolated physically and socially from its neighbors, remote from both Jewish and Arab society. He became a pioneer in his town, the first to see its touristic potential : Jisr A'Zarqa is an authentic fishermen village, located near Caesarea on one of the most beautiful beach in Israel, with an authentic Arab culture, atmosphere and food, and friendly local people.

Ahmad took a course in entrepreneurship in the tourist industry and became a business entrepreneur in the field, believing that he would be able to generate significant employment opportunities for the locals, develop the local economy, change the image of the town and bring about significant social change. His main project is the "Ramadan evening tours", where tourists take part in a guided tour of the town, highlighting its history, archeology, nature and demography. In 2013 Jurban and his Jewish partner Neta initiated a social business called "Juha's Guesthouse", also to bring tourists into the town, providing new customers for local services and shops, also encouraging youngsters to train as local tourist guides. His efforts have won amazing support from the community and the media, including television and newspapers.

TSADIK fellows - Arts and Culture



Said Abu Shakra (2011 fellow), the 4th of 11 children in a family of artists, is the director of the [art gallery in Um el Fahm](#), an Arab town located in Israeli territory. He studied art at RamatHasharon Art College and Avni Art Institute in Tel Aviv, wanting to follow in the footsteps of Walid, his older brother. However, he had to work to support his family, and at age 21 he joined the Israeli police, working with juvenile delinquents; he retired after 25 years of service. In 1996, he started the Um el Fahm gallery, remembering “there was no cultural life here to speak of; we decided to take responsibility for our lives, and we decided we are capable and deserving of a cultural life.” Um el Fahm, this northern Israeli city, the second-biggest Arab locality in Israel after Nazareth, has gained a reputation as a focal point of tension between the country’s Arab minority and the state. With its 100-percent Muslim population, Umm al-Fahm is the capital of the Islamic Movement in Israel, a religious and nationalist group which has run the city’s municipality for the last 20 years.

Today, Said teaches Israeli Jews and Arabs to live together with respect, organizing joint exhibits and workshops. At the same time, he sees highlighting the Palestinian identity of his constituents as an important part of his mission. A documentation project of the Wadi Ara district in which Umm al-Fahm is located, including a photo- and oral-history archive and exhibit, has become a central plank of the museum plan. The gallery is in the middle of a campaign to build what will be the first museum of modern art in the Israeli Arab sector. The dynamic 53-year-old Abu Shakra is constantly devising ways to involve the community in his work, for example offering art and ballet classes.

Abu Shakra managed to attract an ecumenical audience for his exhibitions, many of which attempt to combine the works of both Israeli and Palestinian artists. He believes strengthening the Palestinian identity of Israel’s Arab minority does not threaten Israel’s Jewish identity but empowers both sides to build their joint future: “We say Palestinian memory and Jewish memory must live alongside each other. We have to look each other in the eye.” (with excerpts from Hadassah Magazine).



Ibtisam Mara’ana (2012 fellow), was born in 1975 in Faradis, a Muslim, Arab, working class village in the north of Israel. At the age of 18 Ibtisam was accepted to film school where she began to create without previously ever having seen a film in a cinema. Her first commercial release, *Paradise Lost*, is considered to be the first film to be made from the perspective of a Palestinian woman.

Ibtisam Films www.ibtisamfilms.com/en-us/ is a platform for bold and brave filmmaking which confronts taboos, examines and deconstructs structures of oppression. The film factory is committed to its workers, to their unique voices, to their progress and to an increasingly equal, free and creative society. It produces films which have a strong personal voice exploring the borders and boundaries of Palestinian and Israeli society with a focus on women and minorities. The films explore gender, class, racism, collective and individual identity, history, the present and dreams for the future.

Filmography includes “77 steps” , the personal journey of the director who encounters discrimination by landlords because of her Arab origins; “Lady kul el-Arab”, story of a Druze woman in the middle of a complicated conflict in which the tradition and values of her society clash with her attempt to participate in the Israeli fashion world. Ibtisam is the winner of numerous awards, both in Israel and internationally, including DocAviv Int’l Film Festival 2007, Biarritz International Film Festival 2008, and the New Delhi International Women Film Festival 2008.



NABEEL ABBOUD-ASHKAR (2013 fellow), born in Nazareth in 1978, graduated from Tel Aviv University in both physics and music, studying violin under Semyon Yaroshevich and Yair Kless. In 2007 he completed his master’s degree at the Hochschule fur Musik, Rostock, Germany. He was one of the first members of the West-Eastern Divan orchestra, founded and led by Daniel Barenboim. In 2012, he received the Yoko Ono Award for Courage in the Arts.

Nabeel found his calling as a musician, teacher and agent for social change: he is a leading proponent of the role of music as a common language to bridge social, political and cultural differences that so often lead to division and conflict in Israel. In 2006 Nabeel established the Barenboim-Said Music Conservatory in Nazareth which became known in 2012 as the Polyphony Conservatory, now one of the leading conservatories in Israel. No longer do gifted young musicians from Nazareth have to travel to Tel Aviv to develop their talents: committed to the highest degrees of excellence, students of the Polyphony Conservatory have regularly won top prizes in prestigious music competitions. In addition to music education, the Polyphony Conservatory emphasizes social education and development of its students as conveyors of understanding and dialogue through music. Another major component of Nabeel’s vision is to bring music, particularly classical music, into children’s lives at an early age. To this end, he has initiated the Alhan Music Appreciation Program, a three-year curriculum that brings classical Western music and Arabic music into both Arab and Jewish elementary schools. This year more than 4000 children participate in Alhan classes.



Mira Anwar Awad (*2013 fellow*) was born in Rama village in the Galilee in 1975, to a Palestinian father and Bulgarian mother. She started singing from an early age, performing from the age of 9, and at the age of 15 she started writing her own songs which are a fusion of several different influences. She moved to Haifa and studied Fine Arts and English Literature for two years, then studied in Tel-Aviv in Rimon School for Jazz and contemporary music. Mira started a career in acting in 1999 when she performed in an Arabic speaking musical, then on Israeli stages working in both languages, Arabic and Hebrew. Mira also appears on TV, and has been working with Israeli international star Noa, the two singers having represented Israel in the Eurovision song contest 2009.

Mira is an activist for the causes of women's rights, equal citizenship for Palestinians living in Israel and environmental awareness, and is active regarding the agenda of dialogue and co-existence between the Jewish and Arab communities in Israel; she works with the Arabic-Hebrew theatre in Yafo, a theatre that is established on the principle of co-existence between the two cultures. She recently started a scholarship project that aims to nurture youth and encourage leadership in the Arab community within Israel. One of the first award went to a group of students who initiated a project of renovating some of their villages' squares, bus stations, and walls.