



President and Chief Executive Officer
Reconstructing Judaism
Wyncote, Pennsylvania

SEARCH SUMMARY

Reconstructing Judaism seeks a bold, strategic, and values-driven leader to serve as its next President & CEO (CEO). Jewish life is undergoing seismic shifts—cultural changes, generational transitions, and evolving notions of practice and identity, all amid complex global challenges. In this transformative time, the movement will hire a leader who embraces Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan's idea of Judaism as "the evolving religious civilization of the Jewish people" and brings a bold vision that will energize communities, inspire individuals, spark innovations, and deepen meaning in a rapidly changing world.

The next CEO will advance Reconstructing Judaism's mission: *to cultivate, provoke, and inspire a deeply rooted, boldly relevant, and co-created Judaism that provides individuals and communities with tools to lead lives of meaning and joy.*

They will shape a compelling vision for Reconstructionism's future, grow resources, and secure financial sustainability through active fundraising, expanded donor engagement, and earned revenue. They will amplify the movement's voice, communicating with clarity and conviction what sets Reconstructionism apart and why its values matter now more than ever. Working in partnership with the Executive Vice President (EVP), the CEO will drive the organization forward to increase its impact by aligning its programs, resources, and culture, and delivering on the movement's strategic priorities.

Working with the Board of Governors (Board), they will address questions of strategy, make decisions material to the organization, and set organizational priorities that ensure long-term vitality for the Reconstructionist movement.

With an annual budget of \$5 million and an endowment of \$15.4 million, Reconstructing Judaism is the central organization of a global movement comprising more than 90 congregations and *havurot* across

North America, and in Europe, the Caribbean, and Brazil. Its core program areas include offering its rabbinical seminary (the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College), providing support to its affiliated congregations, and offering educational resources and enrichment opportunities that enable individuals to bring Jewish ideas into contemporary life. For nearly a century—since Rabbi Kaplan’s daughter, Judith, became the first Bat Mitzvah—the Reconstructionist movement has led organized Judaism on issues of gender equality, LGBTQ+ inclusion, racial justice, and acceptance of multifaith families, as well as constructive engagement across political views. The Reconstructionist movement has had an outsized impact on North American Judaism, including the development of an expanded idea of Jewish communal life that transformed synagogues into more than just places of prayer. The movement celebrates the transformative leadership of Jews of color and Jews by choice, and has a history of educating, ordaining, and engaging rabbis with diverse backgrounds, life experiences, and perspectives. Today, Reconstructing Judaism seeks a leader who will carry forward this tradition of courage and creativity.

The ideal CEO candidate is a visionary strategist and gifted communicator, with a demonstrated ability to translate mission into action through disciplined choices and compelling messaging. They will bring a demonstrated fundraising track record—cultivating major gifts, expanding donor relationships, and building new philanthropic partnerships—and strong business acumen. They will champion leadership development across the movement, empowering staff, faculty, students, and lay leaders to lead boldly and collaboratively. This leader will inspire confidence, foster collaboration, and navigate complexity with clarity and conviction, working closely with a dedicated Board and talented staff to advance the movement’s mission.

ABOUT RECONSTRUCTING JUDAISM

Reconstructing Judaism is the hub of the Reconstructionist movement. Formed in 2012 through the merger of the [Reconstructionist Rabbinical College](#) (RRC) and the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation, Reconstructing Judaism is the umbrella organization for both the affiliated congregations and the College. At its foundation is Rabbi Kaplan’s vision of Judaism as an evolving civilization—embracing change, democratic engagement, egalitarianism, and pluralism, while maintaining a deep respect for our traditions and past practices.

Reconstructing Judaism is guided by its vision of a diverse, connected, and engaged Judaism that meaningfully contributes to a more just and compassionate world. Toward that vision, the organization helps strengthen affiliated communities, supports Jewish learning and practice by individuals, and prepares rabbis for Jewish life and culture as it is today and as it will evolve in the future. Reconstructing Judaism sparks spiritual creativity that speaks to contemporary life. The organization is deeply committed to creating spaces where people with differing opinions on important matters can be in community with one another. Building on its legacy of inclusion and social justice, Reconstructing Judaism brings that same moral clarity to today’s challenges.

This is evident in the movement's commitment to bold steps toward justice. For example, Reconstructing Judaism's [Jews and Race Initiative](#), led by its Center for Jewish Ethics, advances racial justice through research, public scholarship, and curricula that explore race, religion, and Jewish identity to help communities challenge racism alongside honoring Judaism's multiracial heritage. In 2023, Reconstructing Judaism led 200 participants on a learning civil rights pilgrimage through Alabama and Georgia, and adopted a [resolution supporting reparations for slavery](#). In 2024, RRC launched the [1299 Reckoning Project](#) to examine how race shaped key decisions in its history and to confront missed opportunities for *tikkun olam*, including the impact of relocating RRC's campus from North Philadelphia to the Philadelphia suburbs in the 1980s.

These efforts reflect the ethical framework that informs Reconstructing Judaism's approach to Israel and its relationship to the Palestinian people. As a member of the [Progressive Israel Network](#), Reconstructing Judaism is committed to Israel's future as the national homeland of the Jewish people and as a democracy that lives in peace and security with its neighbors—commitments deeply rooted in Jewish values and Kaplan's vision of democracy and human dignity.

Reconstructionist Rabbinical Education (RRC)

Founded in 1968 as the movement's seminary, RRC educates rabbis who embody the Reconstructionist commitment to deeply rooted, boldly relevant, and co-created Judaism to carry on the movement's role as a uniquely influential creative engine of American Judaism. The College prepares rabbis to lead and teach with compassion and vision—equipping them to embrace complexity and diversity, nurture communities rooted in belonging and justice, and cultivate dialogue and productive communication across differences in view.

RRC's students and graduates are expanding the range of people who find belonging in Jewish community and of bringing forth new possibilities in Jewish life. RRC's increasingly diverse student body forms a close-knit, deeply engaged community, immersed in rigorous Jewish learning on campus, in the field, and in Israel. Students develop expertise to serve congregations, college campuses, hospitals, and long-term care facilities, Jewish schools and camps, non-profit organizations, and other settings. Today, 43 students are enrolled at RRC, taught and mentored by 13 core faculty members and academic administrators, as well as affiliated and adjunct faculty. Generous scholarship aid is vital to attracting top candidates and ensuring this intensive program remains accessible to rabbinical students.

Under the leadership of the Vice President (VP) for Academic Affairs, RRC offers a five-year curriculum including two years of field study—with an additional *mekhinah* (preparatory) year, if and as students need. RRC has ordained more than 450 rabbis since its inception. Graduates are recognized leaders who shape Jewish life within and beyond Reconstructionist communities—RRC alums are widely regarded as outstanding teachers, skillful community builders, and attuned pastoral counselors, earning awards and recognition for their contributions to Jewish thought and scholarship, for creating inclusive communities, and for advancing social justice work and multifaith collaboration.

RRC is proud of its history of graduating rabbis with underrepresented identities. Over time, RRC and Reconstructing Judaism have accepted and broadened acceptance throughout the Jewish community of Jews of color, Jews by choice, Jews with non-Jewish partners, and LGBTQ+ Jews, among others, recognizing the importance of a rabbinate that reflects the diversity of the Jewish people. RRC's commitment to equity and inclusion has led to milestones that have transformed Jewish American life:

- **1969:** RRC admitted its first woman as a rabbinical student, opening doors for gender equality in rabbinic leadership, setting a precedent that other seminaries have followed.
- **1985:** RRC became the first American Jewish seminary to admit openly gay students, again setting a precedent that other seminaries have followed.
- **2008:** RRC ordained its first profoundly deaf rabbi, expanding accessibility in Jewish leadership.
- **2009:** RRC welcomed its first openly transgender student, affirming its commitment to gender diversity.
- **2015:** RRC adopted a policy welcoming rabbinical candidates with non-Jewish partners, reflecting evolving Jewish family structures.
- **2017:** RRC issued its first diploma with non-gendered Hebrew text.
- **2017:** RRC graduated its first rabbi who identified as Black, increasing racial diversity in the rabbinate.

Supporting Congregations

Reconstructing Judaism strengthens Jewish community life through its [Thriving Communities Department](#), which supports 92 Reconstructionist congregations and havurot across North America and internationally. Led by the VP for Thriving Communities & Partnerships, Thriving Communities offers affiliated congregations a suite of services tailored to meet diverse needs, including personalized coaching and consulting to address organizational and leadership needs, well-curated resource databases, site visits, trainings, and convenings for congregational lay and professional leaders, as well as rabbinical placement.

It also staffs and supports movement-wide panels and working groups—such as the [Joint Israel Commission](#) (JIC), the [Tikkun Olam Commission](#) (TOC), the [Jews of Color and Allies Advisory Group](#), and the [Plenum](#) (the “Congress” of the congregations)—that amplify community voices and shape priorities across the Reconstructionist movement.

Engaging Individuals

Reconstructing Judaism creates pathways for spiritual expression, Jewish learning and enrichment, and communal connection through its “direct to user” initiatives. These include [Ritualwell](#)—an online, crowd-sourced and crowd-created community—which brings the power of Jewish ritual into contemporary life through creative liturgy, poetry, and spiritual resources, and [Evolve](#), an online platform for groundbreaking conversations that address urgent issues shaping Jewish communities today. Featuring outstanding teachers from within and beyond the Reconstructionist movement, Reconstructing Judaism

regularly offers a wide range of online workshops, classes, and gathering spaces. It sponsors periodic in-person gatherings, including regional Shabbatonim, educational travel experiences, and a movement-wide convention once every four years.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE NEXT PRESIDENT & CEO

Lead a Bold Vision for Reconstructionism's Future

Reconstructing Judaism stands at a defining moment in Jewish life. Cultural shifts, generational change, and evolving notions of identity and practice necessitate leadership that is confident and adaptable. Using the current strategic plan as a launching point, the next CEO will define and champion a vision that honors Reconstructionism's legacy of innovation, democratic engagement, egalitarianism, and pluralism—while shaping the future.

Working with a strong senior leadership team, the CEO will translate that vision into action through sustainable strategies and compelling messaging that energize the movement, attract people and resources, and expand Reconstructionism's reach. Success will require disciplined choices and the courage to make trade-offs, recognizing that clarity of direction matters more than trying to be all things to all people.

Secure the Movement's Financial Future

Financial sustainability is essential to the movement's vitality in a time of flux in Jewish life and philanthropy. The CEO serves as the lead major gift fundraiser, making development a primary responsibility of this role. In partnership with the EVP and the senior leadership team, the next CEO will build on the financial sustainability initiative launched in 2023 to strengthen long-term stability and maximize impact. This multi-year effort focuses on diversifying income streams, aligning resources with mission priorities, improving operational efficiency, and adapting to a changing philanthropic landscape. Priorities include mission-aligned earned income, donor retention and expansion, values-aligned academic enrollment growth, and new philanthropic partnerships. Success will require creativity and rigor—cultivating major gifts, advancing legacy giving, strengthening foundation relationships, and identifying innovative funding models—while ensuring transparency and accountability in every financial decision.

Amplify the Movement's Voice

Reconstructing Judaism holds a distinctive place in Jewish life and makes contributions that matter deeply to communities today within and beyond Reconstructionism. Working with the senior leadership team, the next CEO will lead this role with clarity and conviction—defining what sets the movement apart and

why its voice is essential, while representing its values and offerings in ways that resonate externally with congregations, partners, funders, and the wider public.

As the organization's primary ambassador, the CEO must be a visible and trusted presence—in the high public profile of the position—to inspire confidence, strengthen relationships, and speak with courage on complex issues, including but not limited to those related to Israel, Palestine, and Zionism.

Across all platforms—from public forums to digital media—the movement's voice must remain clear, confident, and compelling as Reconstructing Judaism seeks to understand the evolving needs and desires of Jews and their loved ones in today's world. The CEO will serve as the voice of Reconstructing Judaism's religious and moral perspective in the public sphere and will work to expand Reconstructionism and its influence in the world.

Unify the Organization for Impact

More than a decade after merging the rabbinical school and congregational network, Reconstructing Judaism is ready to move from structural integration to shared purpose—anchoring a unified organization that centers the movement. Together with the other members of the senior team, the CEO will nurture and expand its existing close partnerships, both within the movement (especially the [Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association](#) (RRA) and [Havaya Summer Programs](#)) and those beyond (including the [Jewish Social Justice Roundtable](#) and the Progressive Israel Network, as well as other rabbinical seminaries, denominational organizations, and more). This is about unlocking the full power of the movement to deliver impact at scale and making smart decisions about which parts of Reconstructing Judaism's work are best addressed independently and when to pursue collaborations with values-aligned organizations.

The next CEO will partner with the EVP, a strong senior team, and a talented staff to drive execution and align structure, resources, and culture with strategic priorities—turning complexity into clarity and momentum. The goal is to build an organization that thrives as a unified whole, drawing strength from diverse voices and ideas to propel the movement forward.

Building on current progress toward operational efficiency, this leader will make decision-making transparent, reinforce accountability, and define clear measures of success.

Educate Rabbis to Shape Judaism's Future

As Jewish life and practice evolve, the RRC must continue to prepare rabbis within the Reconstructionist understanding of Judaism as a dynamic civilization characterized by vibrant diversity and ongoing change to serve the communities, organizations, and people where they will work. RRC trains rabbis who are equipped to respond to the experiences and needs of diverse Jewish communities and to meet the world's urgent need for moral leadership. Congregational needs will change and the roles of rabbis will expand and adjust. Jewish learning will draw from a growing range of sources. With the VP for Academic Affairs,

the CEO will ensure that rabbinic education is relevant to the work the students will do, rich in text study, and grounded in real-world experiences.

RRC has led American Jewish seminaries in expanding who is becoming rabbis and how it trains them, most recently through its William H. Fern Program in Field Education. This program offers paid internships to students in a range of rabbinic settings, including congregations, college campuses, hospitals, and nonprofit organizations.

Field education is paired with immersive text study and teaching in the practical skills and theological background to create a more socially just, environmentally sustainable and spiritually fulfilling society.

Partner with the Board to Drive Transformation

As Reconstructing Judaism enters its next chapter, calling for transformative leadership, its next CEO will work hand in hand with the Board to lead this change, building alignment and momentum across the movement in changing times. Success will mean supporting the Board as it leans into this moment, brings its expertise to advance the vision, and champions strategies for growth and earned revenue.

Together, the CEO and Board will shape the future of the Reconstructionist movement, ensuring it is well-prepared for what's ahead. In the Reconstructionist model of lay and rabbinic partnership, the CEO and the Board Chair will collaborate closely.

This leader will also drive efforts to increase diversity on the Board across demographics, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, lived experience, geographic location, political viewpoints, and age—ensuring governance reflects and benefits from the movement's rich diversity. At the same time, they will strengthen the internal culture of philanthropy by continuing to engage Board members as active partners in fundraising.

Elevate Leadership Across the Movement

Staff and lay leadership will be a critical engine of Reconstructing Judaism's next chapter—energizing people and amplifying impact across the movement. The next CEO will join and foster a culture that lifts up talent and creates pathways to leadership at every level—empowering staff, faculty, students, graduates, lay leaders, and congregants to lead boldly and collaboratively in advancing the movement's mission.

By investing in people and creating meaningful opportunities for growth and shared responsibility, this CEO will position organizational leaders as public ambassadors—amplifying communications, building reputation, and representing the movement in Jewish communal conversations and collaborative initiatives, speaking on panels, and engaging diverse constituencies across the Jewish and broader civic landscape.

CORE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

The ideal candidate brings prior experience in most, if not all, the following areas of responsibility:

- **Vision and Strategic Leadership** – Leads a bold, future-focused vision; serves as a strategic leader who honors tradition while shaping the future; translates vision into action through disciplined choices and sustainable strategies; and energizes stakeholders and expands reach and impact.
- **Resource Development** – Secures resources through major gifts, legacy giving, and donor engagement.
- **Business Model Innovation** – With the EVP, advances innovative nonprofit business models and diversifies revenue streams; oversees budgets, financial forecasting, and multi-year sustainability planning.
- **Brand Marketing and Communications** – Champions and amplifies the organization’s voice and values across all audiences, internal and external; ensures clarity, consistency, and resonance in communications that advance mission and strengthen identity.
- **Change Management and Organizational Transition** – Also with the EVP, leads organizational changes with transparency and clarity; aligns people, systems, and strategy during periods of change to maintain stability and advance priorities.
- **Organizational Alignment and Culture** – Fosters alignment between mission, programs, and people; cultivates a culture of collaboration, inclusion, and shared purpose to advance the organization’s vision.
- **Governance Partnership and Board Development** – Builds a trusting, collaborative partnership with the Board, aligning governance with mission and strategic priorities, and strengthens Board capacity and engagement to advance the organizational vision.
- **Leadership Development and Distributed Leadership** – Builds leadership capacity across teams, recruits burgeoning leaders, including lay leaders, and creates meaningful, transformative opportunities for growth, empowerment, and shared responsibility.
- **Equity & Inclusion** – Embeds egalitarianism, opportunity, and justice into organizational systems, decision-making processes, and culture; actively engages diverse communities and perspectives; fosters a sense of belonging and shared responsibility across identities and experiences.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Reconstructing Judaism welcomes candidates who bring diverse backgrounds to this role, including rabbinical ordination (rabbinical study at RRC and/or membership in the RRA is a significant asset but is not required), advanced academic training in Jewish studies or related fields, significant leadership experience in Jewish or higher education organizations, or deep engagement with Reconstructionist communities as rabbi or an active lay leader.

PERSONAL QUALITIES AND VALUES

The ideal candidate brings personal qualities essential to leading a diverse, mission-driven movement, including:

- **Reconstructionist Values** – Demonstrates deep commitment to the Reconstructionist mission and approach to Jewish life, embracing equality, inclusion, justice, co-creation, collaboration, and covenantal community.
- **Decisive and Steady** – Exercises sound judgment and diplomacy, navigating complexity with confidence and calm.
- **Ethical and Humble** – Models integrity and humility, especially in moments of tension or disagreement.
- **Relational and Communicative** – Practices deep listening and communicates with clarity, authenticity, and respect across diverse groups. Builds trust and sustains long-term relationships within and beyond the movement.
- **Bridge-Builder** – Brings empathy, skill, and purpose to navigating religious, ideological, generational, and cultural differences.
- **Resilient and Adaptive** – Maintains focus, confidence, and flexibility during times of change.
- **Collaborative and Empowering** – Champions shared leadership and creates conditions for others to thrive and lead.
- **Courageous** – Leads with confidence and humility at all times; commits to fostering, leading, and joining challenging conversations.

We recognize that candidates from historically underrepresented groups may hesitate to apply based on our qualifications. In reality, no one meets them all. If your experience aligns with many of these qualifications, we strongly encourage you to apply.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

This is a full-time, exempt position with excellent benefits that include a full suite of health benefit offerings, a generous 401(k), ample paid vacation and sick time, and time off for major Jewish and American holidays. Reconstructing Judaism offers a dynamic and progressive workplace.

The expected salary range is \$250,000–\$275,000, commensurate with experience. The role is based in Wyncote, Pennsylvania, and requires extensive travel (estimated at more than 35% of the time in the first year or years) to engage with stakeholders and communities across the country and internationally, as needed, and to represent the movement at high-profile Jewish communal and public events and gatherings.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and applications—including a resume/CV and a letter of interest (2–4 pages)—should be submitted via the [Isaacson, Miller website](#).

Rebecca Swartz, Mia Carpiniello, and Harley Bartles
Isaacson, Miller

Diversity is a core value of Reconstructing Judaism. The organization is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of any legally protected classes. All are welcome to apply.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

If you require reasonable accommodation to complete an application, interview, or otherwise participate in the candidate selection process, please direct your inquiries to Harley Bartles, hbartles@imsearch.com.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Reconstructing Judaism. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by Reconstructing Judaism would supersede any conflicting information in this document.

APPENDIX: ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Governance and Organizational Leadership

Board Governance

Reconstructing Judaism's governance reflects its deep commitment to participatory decision-making and democratic practices, ensuring that leaders and communities collaborate in shaping the movement's future—principles that have long distinguished Reconstructionism. This commitment is embodied in the structure and work of the Board, which provides strategic and fiduciary oversight for the organization.

The Board comprises an engaged group of 35 members, including five voting ex officio members representing key movement bodies—such as the JIC, TOC, Jewish Reconstructionist Camping Corporation (JRCC), and the RRA—plus four non-voting ex officio members representing students and faculty, and four honorary members who provide continuity and counsel.

Meeting 5-6 times annually, the Board addresses critical questions of strategy, finance, governance, and impact—not just routine oversight. Standing committees (Audit, College, Development, Executive, Finance, Governance, Investment, and Metrics) provide expertise and accountability, ensuring decisions are informed and forward-looking.

The Executive Committee of the Board comprises the five Board officers, several additional at-large members of the Board, the CEO, the Plenum Chair, key committee or commission chairs, and senior staff (e.g., the EVP and VPs), serving as non-voting ex officio members. The Executive Committee is authorized to exercise the powers and responsibilities of the Board between Board meetings.

The Board is led by the Board Chair and includes, as presently configured, four additional Board officers: two Vice Chairs, the Treasurer (having overall responsibility for oversight of Reconstructing Judaism's financial affairs), and the Secretary. The Board officers and CEO meet regularly on a bi-weekly basis. The current Board Chair has been a member of the Board for approximately eight years and formerly served as a Vice Chair of the Board and as Chair of the Plenum.

The Plenum strengthens movement-wide engagement. This body, comprising representatives of affiliated congregations and *havurot*, votes on key issues such as public positions and internal policies and ratifies the Board's at-large slate. This structure amplifies voices across the movement and reinforces democratic participation. Coordinated by a Steering Committee, the Plenum reflects the movement's commitment to inclusion and shared vision.

The rabbinical program is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. As an accredited institution of higher learning whose students are eligible to receive federal student loan

assistance, the rabbinical program operates under a customary dual governance structure led by both the faculty and the Board of Governors. The faculty (under the leadership of the VP of Academic Affairs) exercises responsibility for academic affairs, and the CEO and Board have overall fiduciary responsibility.

Organizational Leadership

Since the 2014 merger, [Rabbi Deborah Waxman](#), PhD, has served with distinction as President and CEO of Reconstructing Judaism. To enable her to perform her duties externally, she works in partnership with Executive Vice President [Rabbi Amber Powers](#), who leads the organization internally and supervises the senior team of vice presidents. There are currently four other vice presidents: the VP for Academic Affairs, the VP for Engagement & Innovation, the VP for Strategic Advancement, and the VP for Thriving Communities. Staff in human resources, administration, finance, and operations provide essential infrastructure and organizational support.

The Executive Director of Havaya Summer Programs, employed by the Jewish Reconstructionist Camping Corporation, is also part of Reconstructing Judaism's senior leadership team. Camp Havaya operates as an affiliate of Reconstructing Judaism. It is structured as a one-member membership organization, with Reconstructing Judaism serving as its sole member and financial guarantor. The RRA is a separate organization with which we closely collaborate. The administration offices of Havaya Summer Programs and the RRA are located within Reconstructing Judaism's building.

Reconstructing Judaism's total staffing, which includes the RRC faculty, is 36 FTE. 80% of the staff live in the Greater Philadelphia area; the remaining 20% are fully remote. Local staff work on a hybrid schedule that generally combines one to four in-office and one to four remote workdays per week, based on their specific job responsibilities. Some specialized services, such as website maintenance and student loan administration, are outsourced to keep internal resources focused on mission-critical priorities.

Finance and Sustainability

Reconstructing Judaism operates with an annual budget of approximately \$5 million, including a diverse revenue mix that includes annual fundraising (approximately 53%), tuition and fees (22%), endowment income (10%), affiliate dues (6%), and other sources such as events and publications (5%).

In fiscal 2025 (ending 8/31/25), based on unaudited internal financial statements, Reconstructing Judaism produced a 9% positive net operating result on expenses of \$4.9 million, boosted by non-recurring one-time revenue events. In fiscal year 2024, by comparison, it produced a negative 2% net operating result on expenses of \$5.03 million.

The Reconstructing Judaism Board and senior leadership team are pursuing a multi-year financial strategy alignment process in response to major shifts in Jewish institutional and individual giving. Managed by the Executive Vice President, the organization aims to increase earned revenue, diversify and increase

donated revenue, and manage expenses closely to achieve a more sustainable business model going forward. As a result, the Board approved a one-time deficit budget for fiscal 2026 to right-size the organization and build capacity before welcoming its new CEO.

At the end of FY 2025, the organization's endowment exceeded \$15.4 million. Until the current fiscal year (2026), the Board reduced endowment draws by 0.1% annually. For the current fiscal year, it maintained its endowment draw steady relative to fiscal 2025 as part of its financial alignment strategy.

Historically, fundraising has relied on major gifts and strong Board participation. Looking ahead, the next CEO will lead efforts to attract new individual donors, secure support from charitable foundations, and expand and diversify other revenue streams, ensuring sustainability in a rapidly evolving philanthropic landscape. Like many national Jewish organizations, Reconstructing Judaism is responding to seismic shifts in Jewish philanthropy, positioning itself to thrive through innovation, strategic partnerships, and deeper engagement with donors and communities.

Reconstructing Judaism's Strategy

Reconstructing Judaism is guided by its [2021–2026 Strategic Plan](#), which outlines five goals for strengthening the movement and ensuring its long-term vitality. These include:

- Engage, cultivate, and strengthen diverse communities that align with Reconstructionist values;
- Develop, support, and market platforms where individuals can connect, find community, and co-create Jewish life.
- Invest in the future of Reconstructionist rabbinical education.
- Join and lead Jewish efforts to dismantle systemic racism and advance racial diversity, equity, and inclusion within the movement.
- Build a financially sustainable organization with the capacity to innovate and adapt.

This plan provides foundational direction for the movement. The next CEO will have the opportunity to bring these priorities to life—making bold choices and strategic tradeoffs, driving innovation, testing new models, and reimagining what thriving Jewish communities can look like for decades to come, in close partnership with Board leadership.

History of the Reconstructionist Movement

The Reconstructionist movement began as an idea that challenged the status quo. In the early 20th century, Rabbi Kaplan, at the time a faculty member at the Jewish Theological Seminary, envisioned Judaism as a dynamic civilization—embracing diversity, creativity, and change. He argued that Judaism's structures, beliefs, and practices must be renewed in every generation to remain relevant and sustainable. His concept of Judaism as a "civilization" affirmed multiple ways of being Jewish—religiously, culturally, and politically.

From its inception, the movement broke new ground and redefined norms. In 1922, Rabbi Kaplan founded the Society for the Advancement of Judaism, the first Reconstructionist congregation in the United States. That same year, his daughter Judith became the first girl to celebrate a bat mitzvah—an innovation that transformed Jewish life. In 1955, the Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations and Havurot launched with four charter congregations and a mandate to build new institutions and expand the movement's reach. By 1968, the RRC opened, marking the movement's emergence as a distinct and forward-thinking denomination within American Judaism.

Today, Reconstructionist Judaism builds on its legacy of renewal and transformation—shaping communities and lives that thrive in a rapidly changing world while remaining deeply rooted in Jewish tradition. Looking ahead, Reconstructing Judaism will continue to lead boldly at a moment when leadership matters more than ever—developing new models of Jewish life that speak to the future with the same courage and creativity that Kaplan's vision embodied a century ago.