



*Search for the Executive Director of the HUC-JIR Research Center in Cincinnati  
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion  
Cincinnati, Ohio*

The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) seeks a visionary and entrepreneurial leader to serve as the Executive Director (ED) of the Cincinnati Campus Research Center. The inaugural Executive Director will have the opportunity to pioneer a new chapter for HUC-JIR in its historic home as they work to assess, develop, and represent a unified campus structure and program. Building upon this world-renowned institution of learning and scholarship, the Executive Director will leverage its unique resources to convene scholars, students, and Jewish leaders who will advance scholarship and generate new ideas that will energize American Judaism.

Founded in 1875, HUC-JIR cultivates scholars, leaders, and change-makers transforming Jewish communities worldwide. HUC-JIR educates leaders for service to the Reform Movement and the Jewish people as rabbis, cantors, educational leaders, nonprofit professionals, and pastoral counselors, and offers graduate programs to scholars and clergy of all faiths. With campuses in four cities on two different continents – Cincinnati, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, and New York – HUC-JIR's centers of learning serve as an inclusive, sacred, and respectful environment for intellectual and spiritual exploration.

For the last 150 years, Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion has spearheaded the work of uncovering, understanding, and communicating the power and relevance of the Jewish story. With the closure of our small residential degree and ordination programs in Cincinnati, HUC-JIR is refocusing the Cincinnati campus as a center for research and educational engagement: strengthening the impact of the American Jewish Archives (AJA), Klau Library, Skirball Museum, and HUC Press; and creating new educational opportunities for students and faculty from our other campuses, visiting scholars, North American Jewish congregations, and Reform movement partners to study on the historic campus. With a goal of developing and advancing a dynamic research agenda for the Cincinnati Research Center, the Executive Director will address several key priorities, including the assessment and elevation of the campus' archives and centers, exploring partnership opportunities that will enable the development of robust programs, and strengthening ties with the Cincinnati community region.

## **About Hebrew Union College- Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR)**

In 1875, the Hebrew Union College was founded in Cincinnati by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise as the first permanent Jewish institution of higher learning in America. HUC-JIR is the academic, spiritual, and professional leadership development center of Reform Judaism, working to cultivate scholars, leaders, and change-makers who transform Jewish communities worldwide. In 1950, HUC merged with the pluralistic Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, founded in 1922 by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. The Los Angeles campus opened in 1954 to serve the Diaspora's second-largest Jewish population. The Jerusalem campus opened in 1963, and today, it serves as the center for both the American Year-in-Israel program and multiple Israeli academic programs, including the Israeli rabbinic program.

A multi-campus academic and spiritual learning community, HUC-JIR builds vibrant progressive Judaism in North America, Israel, and around the globe by:

- Studying the great issues of Jewish life, history and thought with an open, egalitarian, inclusive and pluralistic spirit;
- Educating innovative, visionary clergy and professionals who embody the sustaining values, responsibilities, practices, and texts of Jewish tradition to inspire future generations; and
- Advancing the critical study of Judaism and Jewish culture in accordance with the highest standards of modern academic scholarship.

After a two-year strategic planning process that included engagement, listening, analysis, and deliberation with hundreds of community stakeholders, the HUC-JIR Board of Governors approved a new path forward for the College-Institute in April 2022. Building on its historic strengths – outstanding graduate programs that train Jewish leaders and scholars, world-class academic resources, and field-leading faculty – the new strategic plan will bring increased innovation and flexibility to the institution, embracing a future where technology allows us to build communities of spiritual and academic inquiry that are not limited by the historic four-campus footprint. As such, the three U.S. rabbinical programs now function as one rabbinical school operating on two residential campuses with a curriculum that is more flexible and outcomes-based. This direction includes creating a new academically rigorous flexible residency clergy program to open the rabbinate and cantorate to students who cannot relocate to a campus city. This new path forward reimagines the Cincinnati campus to ensure that the world-class library, archives, and museum serve scholars, students, and community learners in new and innovative ways.

## **About the Cincinnati Campus**

The Cincinnati campus is a vital center of learning, scholarship, and community. Set across seven acres of land, the Cincinnati campus is home to three world-renowned institutions, which together form the Research Center, together with a small faculty including scholars of the Bible, Rabbinics, Jewish History, Jewish Thought and Liturgy.

### *Klau Library*

The Klau Library of HUC-JIR is the oldest Jewish institutional library in North America. Starting in 1875 with 130 volumes, it grew to be the largest Judaica collection in the Diaspora, second only to the National Library of Israel. The Library's holdings – including incunabula, rare books, manuscripts, music, maps, stamps, bookplates, and other primary source material – have grown as a result of its historical mission: to collect, preserve, and provide access to the total record of Jewish thought and experience in all their historical and geographic sweep.

The Klau Library also plays an important role in both the local and global community. All residents of the Greater Cincinnati area have access to the collection, and the Library lends thousands of items yearly via interlibrary loan. Rare and important manuscripts, books, and special collections are also lent to other institutions around the world in support of their exhibits and scholarly research. The Klau Library proudly boasts 530,000 printed books, including 14,000 texts in the David Ellenson Rare Book room, 100,000 digital images, 3,300 sound recordings, and 1,200 current periodical subscriptions. Additionally, the Library boasts the largest collection of Chinese Jewish manuscripts in the world, the largest collection of Jewish sacred music, including the Offenbach and Birnbaum Collections, and the largest collection of illuminated Scrolls of Esther.

### *Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives*

HUC-JIR's Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA) was established in 1947 by renowned historian Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus to collect, preserve, and make available materials on the history of Jews and Jewish communities in the Western Hemisphere, including data of a political, economic, social, cultural, and religious nature. The AJA exists to preserve the continuity of Jewish life and learning for future generations and -aspires to serve scholars, educators, students, and researchers of all backgrounds and beliefs.

As an active hub for scholarship, the AJA boasts 15,000 linear feet of documentation across 45 million individual pieces of paper. It proudly welcomes 350,000 annual website visits, 3,600 annual materials requests, and 1,300 researchers who utilize the reading room each year. In addition to procuring an extensive collection of primary source materials, the AJA produces scholarly publications (including *The American Jewish Archives Journal*), sponsors educational programming, and produces educational tools and resources, many of which are available online.

The Fellowship Program was established in 1977 by our institution's founder, the late Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus. Since its inception, more than 500 scholars from over 20 countries have been named Marcus Center Fellows. Today, the center administers fifteen endowed fellowships annually for teachers, students, scholars, and practitioners. 19 distinguished scholars from across the globe were invited to the Cincinnati campus as part of the 2023-2024 Fellows class.

### *The Cincinnati Skirball Museum*

The Cincinnati Skirball Museum is one of the oldest repositories of Jewish cultural artifacts in America and serves to preserve and interpret a rich collection of fine art and artifacts focused on the unique story of the Cincinnati Jewish community and broader global Jewish history, religion, and culture. Today, the Skirball is the largest and most prominent Jewish museum between the Alleghenies and Rockies and serves as an important community treasure for the city of Cincinnati.

The Skirball Museum is comprised of a core collection (entitled *An Eternal People: The Jewish Experience*) as well as rotating special exhibits that portray the cultural, historical, and religious heritage of the Jewish people.

Through its objects on view and in storage, augmented by a rich and growing database of information and images on the Skirball's webpage, scholars and researchers can engage with objects of material culture that tell the Jewish story in Cincinnati, the Midwest, America, and beyond. Several works from the collections have appeared recently on book covers and as illustrations in various publications.

### *Hebrew Union College Press*

Hebrew Union College Press brings the finest biblical and Judaica scholarship available to readers and institutions the world over. The Press is internationally recognized for the selectivity of its publications and counts among the leading legacy publishers of Jewish Studies. The Press publishes both books and the *Hebrew Union College Annual (HUCA)*, one of the field's most prestigious journals, covering all areas of Jewish Studies, with special attention to historical monographs and bilingual editions that present Hebrew or Yiddish texts alongside English translations. Currently, 130 book titles are available for purchase, and an additional 92 volumes of HUCA are available in print and digital formats.

### **Leadership**

President Andrew Rehfeld's career has bridged both the academic and professional worlds; he received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Chicago in 2000 and served as a member of the tenured faculty in Political Science at Washington University in St. Louis (2001 to 2019) and as President and CEO of the Jewish Federation of St. Louis (2012 to 2019). President Rehfeld was elected as the 10<sup>th</sup> President of HUC-JIR in 2018, the first lay person to serve in the role. He also holds a tenured faculty position as a Professor of Political Thought.

### ***Role of the Inaugural Executive Director***

On the eve of the sesquicentennial anniversary of HUC-JIR, the inaugural Executive Director has a unique opportunity to reimagine and revitalize the scholarly and public-intellectual mission of the first Jewish institution of higher learning in the New World. The Executive Director will redefine and develop the

Cincinnati campus as a center for research and educational engagement, including strengthening the impact of the Klau Library, Skirball Museum, and American Jewish Archives (AJA) and creating new opportunities for academic and alumni fellowships to consider both eternal questions of Jewish Studies and the topical question of Jewish life and leadership.

The ED will have overall responsibility for the Cincinnati Campus Research Center, with an emphasis on assessment, strategy, management, partnerships, and philanthropy. The ED will collaborate closely with the Institutional Advancement team on ongoing communication, programming (including regular and special events), gift solicitations, and bridging the local and international lay leadership of the College-Institute.

A member of the President's cabinet, the Executive Director will report directly to the Vice President of Academic Resources (VPAR), working together to set goals and strategies and measure progress in a mutually supportive relationship. If a qualified academic, the successful candidate will also be eligible to apply for tenure-track position after beginning the executive directorship. The Executive Director will additionally oversee the team of executive managers of the Klau, the AJA, and the Skirball Museum, and the editors of HUC Press, and is expected to work collaboratively with co-located HUC-JIR colleagues in other departments, including academic program officers, the Information Technology team, and the National Business Office. If the candidate currently has tenure at an accredited institution, they are eligible to apply for a separate position as a tenured member of our faculty. Other qualified candidates will be open to apply for a tenured faculty role after three years in the position. In all these aspects of the position, the ED will represent the Research Center locally, nationally, and internationally in communities and academic and cultural institutions.

### **Key Opportunities and Challenges for the Executive Director**

As the Cincinnati Campus enters a new chapter, the ED will be expected to address the following key opportunities and challenges:

#### ***Assess the existing units and programs to help HUC reach its new ambitions as a leading research center***

While the Cincinnati campus has recently undergone an organizational restructuring, the units and resources that make up the Cincinnati Research Center are not new to the College-Institute. The ED will closely assess the existing entities, specifically the Klau, AJA, Skirball Museum, and HUC Press, and determine how they can work together to propel the research center to new heights. This thorough evaluation must be a collaborative process, as the ED will be expected to draw upon the expertise of their Cincinnati colleagues. The outcomes of this important assessment work will help determine the future vision for the research center.

***Revitalize and amplify the Cincinnati campus and its unparalleled institutions of Jewish research and culture***

After the assessment of the existing entities is complete, the Executive Director will chart the course for the Research Center as a preeminent international hub of scholarship and public intellectualism, including scholarly and alumni fellowships and convening programs. The ED will be tasked with breathing new life into the existing world-class resources, employing a traditional humanities scholarly model to establish new entrepreneurial programs, including a fellowship program. Once new programs are established, the ED will manage the execution of the associated programs and budget.

The ED will additionally be responsible for the overarching vision of these entities, finding important moments of intersection and potential collaboration. By leveraging the strengths of each individual institution, the ED will create a unified and impactful research center where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

***Forge new and impactful partnerships with community and academic stakeholders***

Collaborating with leaders across HUC-JIR, the ED will advance the goals of the research center by cultivating new partnerships with other academic and community institutions. With a vast array of possibilities, including cultural institutions and institutions of higher learning, the Executive Director will build upon existing knowledge, collaboratively assess different partnership opportunities, and ultimately decide which will best serve HUC-JIR.

To these potential partnerships the ED must bring a strategic, visionary, and forward-thinking approach to this aspect of the role, as partnerships are an essential component of the research center's long-term viability.

***Shepherd the HUC and surrounding community through a time of evolution***

The Executive Director will join the HUC community during a time of immense change and opportunity. To achieve the goals and aspirations of the research center, the Executive Director must be an experienced leader adept in change management and strong relationship-building skills. While the exact future of the research center may be unknown at this time, the Executive Director will be a central part of the equation to chart a path forward. In doing so, they will need to inspire HUC community members and espouse the benefits of this next chapter for the institution.

***Enhance fundraising and resource generation for the Cincinnati campus***

Working closely with institutional advancement, the Executive Director will serve as a primary fundraiser for the campus, making connections with industry, scholarly communities, and philanthropies both locally and nationwide. Working in collaboration with the Department of Institutional Advancement, the

ED will develop and manage a significant philanthropic portfolio that spans the research center's various entities.

Externally, the ED will spend time in the field, both regionally and nationally, publicizing among colleagues and alumni as potential fellows, speaking publicly, fundraising, and attending occasional administrative meetings of the College-Institute.

### **Qualifications and Characteristics**

While no single candidate will have all the ideal qualifications, candidates should possess many of the following qualifications and characteristics:

- 7-10 years of organizational experience in management, programming, fundraising, and community relations, preferably including experience in higher education;
- A commitment to scholarly research, either in the candidate's own portfolio or as a part of the work the candidate has overseen;
- An advanced degree, preferably a doctorate, in a field related to Jewish Studies, American Jewish History, Rabbinics, or Nonprofit Management;
- Personability and communicativeness among people with diverse backgrounds;
- Ability to organize and advance disparate tasks and project, on varying timelines and in collaboration with diverse constituencies;
- Ability to work in a highly collegial manner within a complex national and international organizational culture, including the ability to manage conflict;
- Superior communication, including compelling public speaking and writing skills;
- Demonstrable successes in or commitment to fundraising as a process and way of doing business, not solely in terms of individual gift solicitation;
- Knowledge of the Reform and general Jewish community, and passion for and commitment to the mission of HUC-JIR;
- Willingness to work occasional evenings and weekends to participate in events;
- Availability and willingness for domestic and occasional international travel.

### **Applications, Inquiries, and Nominations**

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/hebrew-union-college-jewish-institute-religion-cincinnati-campus/executive-director>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged. The expected compensation range is \$165,000-180,000.

Jaime Morgen is leading this search with Debbie Scheibler and Cara Meyers.

*Hebrew Union College is an Equal Opportunity Employer, drug-free workplace, and complies with ADA regulations as applicable.*

#### *Work Environment & Physical Demands*

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this position. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the functions.

Work is typically performed in an indoor office or classroom environment. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to sit or stand, walk, talk, and listen; occasionally, the employee may occasionally have to stoop, bend, reach, and lift up to 20 pounds. Employees need manual dexterity to operate standard office equipment and a personal computer, clarity of speech and hearing or other communication capabilities to discern verbal instructions and to communicate effectively with others and visual acuity to comprehend written work instructions and review, evaluate, and prepare a variety of written materials and documents. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals to perform these functions.

#### *Employee Acknowledgement*

This job description in no way states or implies that these are the only duties to be performed by the employee(s) incumbent in this position. Employees will be required to follow any other job-related instructions and to perform any other job-related duties requested by any person authorized to give instructions or assignments. To perform this job successfully, the incumbents will possess the skills, aptitudes, and abilities to perform each duty proficiently. Some requirements may exclude individuals who pose a direct threat or significant risk to the health or safety of themselves or others. The requirements listed in this document are the minimum levels of knowledge, skills, or abilities. This document does not create an employment contract, implied or otherwise, other than an "at will" relationship.