



JEWISH

SHORESH CHARITABLE TRUST, UK

Shoresh is a mid-size family charitable trust based in the UK. It has assets of £7.25million (US\$9.5million). We use specialist fund managers to place our investments within aggregate funds rather than picking our own investments, which would be seen as too risky. We have a strong faith-consistent basis to all investment decisions and follow the guidelines in the 2006 pamphlet Socially Responsible Investment for Jewish Community Organisations. It draws from Torah, other Biblical, Talmudic and later teachings, and adapts them to today's investment environment.

There is a substantial literature in Jewish Business Ethics which further considers the issue. There is not a laid down body of law requiring particular investment actions in Judaism but rather a tradition of interpretation that mandates action on social, environmental and justice issues.

We do not invest in hedge funds or gambling-led hospitality, due to Jewish law concerning gambling. We do not invest in tobacco, due to Jewish ethics concerning healthy living. We do not invest in publishers with a portfolio including pornography, due to Jewish sexual ethics. In some parts of Judaism there would be a ban on investing in businesses which trade on the Sabbath or hold non-kosher goods over the festival of Pesach. However the Jewish legal tradition has created mechanisms which notionally take them out of the ownership of a person subject to this ban during the period in question. Similarly, there is a ban in some parts of Judaism in lending to a fellow Jew on interest, however, again,

Jewish legal tradition has found a way of making this possible by creating a partnership with the borrower.

We are actively looking for impact investments in the area of environmental and social good. Instructions to prioritise these have been given to the two investment banks that the trust uses to manage our money. At six-monthly meetings with the banks' fund managers we are given lists of all individual investments and can assure ourselves that our screens and impact investment requirements are being met.

- One area that could be of interest is a microfinance fund available through larger fund managers.
- The ban on degrading the environment, *bal taschit*, for example, suggests that funds which invest in sustainable energy generation could be of interest.
- We need environmental and sustainable development projects to be marketed as investable funds to our fund managers so they can assure themselves that they are prudent investments and market them to us. We would certainly use a portion of our portfolio to try such investments, as they match our criteria.

We invest a proportion of our assets (around 5%) in the Israeli stock market, due to our Zionist ethic and our involvement in welfare and access to employment causes in Israel. We are currently seeking appropriate impact investments according to our values.

Contributors to the Jewish guidelines sections: Rabbi Joshua Ratner, JLens Director of Advocacy, Julie Hammerman, JLens Executive Director, Rabbi Jacob Siegel, JLens Director of Engagement; Beth Sirull, Jewish Community Foundation of San Diego CEO, Dalia Black, United Jewish Israel Appeal Director of Impact Investing, Rabbi Mark Goldsmith, Shoresh Charitable Trust Trustee