

Why don't Jewish mega donors give to Jewish causes?

Jewish Giving Question#1:
“Why don't Jewish mega-donors give to Jewish causes?”

- Many Jewish mega-donors will give mega-gifts to universities, philharmonics, operas and hospitals, while making much smaller gifts to the Jewish community. They do not believe that the Jewish community can steward and be responsible for a mega-donor gift in the same way that these other institutions can, because they believe that non-secular institutions are far more professional in their methodology than the “haimish” Jewish community.
- Many younger mega-donors want to know that their “Jewish gift” will have impact beyond the Jewish world, and will have wider local, national or global significance.
- Mega-donors want to be accepted and appear as though they have “made it” in the outside world.
- Mega-donors don't want to look “too Jewish”.
- The “WASP” world respects philanthropy unlike the Jewish communities where it is seen as an obligation – Jewish community is seen as too narrow and judgmental.
- Jewish community does not do enough to recognize their donors.
- Jewish organizations have gained an insular reputation of having little impact and not attempting to see beyond the provincial boxes they have created for themselves.

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**In preparation for this discussion, we disseminated a Jewish mega donor
research report by Gary Tobin who studies various trends in Jewish
philanthropy today.**