

To share your stories, visit australianjewishnews.com/communityheartbeatAround *the community*

'EMBRACING NEW BEGININGS'

Women of Worth returns to the Great

AJN STAFF

WOMEN of Worth (WOW), the much-loved day-long event celebrating the strength and spirit of Jewish women, returns to The Great Synagogue later this month. Now in its fifth edition, WOW continues to grow in scope, heart and impact, welcoming women of all ages and life stages for a powerful experience.

This year's theme, "Embracing New Beginnings", invites participants to explore life's turning points. The program has once again been designed by women, for women, about women, and warmly invites everyone across the Jewish community to attend, men included.

WOW was first developed in

2018 by then-vice president of The Great Synagogue, Caroline Lewis, as part of the synagogue's 140th anniversary celebrations. What began as a special one-off event has become a yearly highlight for Jewish women across Sydney and beyond.

"WOW is for 'WOW' people," said Lewis.

"It's a day of honest conversation, moving stories, practical inspiration, and heartfelt connection. From laughter to learning, from dancing to deep sharing, it's all there. You don't leave the same as you arrived, you leave with your cup refilled."

This year's full-day program will take place across multiple spaces in The Great Synagogue's magnificent heritage building. Attendees



Women of Worth (WOW) at The Great Synagogue.

will be invited to plant their own seedling as a personal marker of growth and intention, and there will be powerful talks by Hayley Mayer, Kerri Sackville and Lee

Kofman. Experts on mind, body and spirit, featuring diverse voices on embracing change in all forms, will be led by Shoshana Eisner and will feature Dee Fittinghoff, Dina

Savitz and Sorella Abrahams.

Naveen Cardo will facilitate a transformative makeover session and the day will close with a joyful Israeli dance session with Nina Rassaby that brings the theme of new beginnings to life through music and movement.

"Whether you come with a friend or on your own, you'll leave feeling seen, supported and re-energised," said Lewis.

"There's a sense of sisterhood at WOW that's hard to describe until you experience it. It's a celebration of who we are and what we can become."

Bookings are essential and places are limited. Reserve your spot now by visiting greatsynagogue.org.au/wow2025booking



From left: Israeli ambassador Amir Maimon, Rabbi Dovid Slavin, Joshua Kowert.

US EMBASSY

Fourth of July celebrations

RABBI Dovid and Laya Slavin from Our Big Kitchen (OBK) were honoured to be invited to the recent Fourth of July celebrations at the US embassy in Canberra, which was transformed into a western-style country fair for the occasion.

Israeli ambassador Amir Maimon was also there to enjoy a night of music, food, fun and fireworks under the stars.

"The night was a great celebration of America's pioneering spirit," said Rabbi Slavin.

"During these challenging times for our people, America has stood as a tower of strength, politically, economically and above all militarily. OBK is deeply honoured to have enjoyed decades of close collaboration with the representatives of the United States in Australia."

JNF AUSTRALIA UNVEILS VITAL PROJECTS

'Donation to destination'

AJN STAFF

OVER recent years, under the guidance of JNF Australia's immediate past president Steven Salamon, the organisation has worked closely with communities on the ground in Israel to carefully select the high-impact projects that the Australian Jewish community can proudly support.

These include supporting critical facilities, infrastructure, emotional recovery and environmental renewal in Israel's north and south in the wake of the October 7 attacks and amid relentless rocket attacks on the northern and southern communities.

"For many years, I've had the privilege of witnessing how donations from Australia transform lives in Israel," said Salamon.

"From donation to destination, we've focused on projects where we know we can make a real and lasting difference, not just today, but for generations to come."

JNF's approach has always

been strategic and compassionate, ensuring that each initiative supported offers both immediate relief and long-term sustainability.

"It's about helping rebuild communities in a way that's smarter, stronger, and more resilient than ever before," said Salamon.

This year's campaign, "Together, We Rise With Israel", will once again directly fund over 20 new projects which support rebuilding recovery and future growth – from restoring essential infrastructure, to creating therapeutic spaces and environmental rehabilitation. Every initiative is designed in collaboration and consultation with the affected communities.

In the south, JNF Australia will restore the water reservoir at Nahal Oz and in Be'eri, where released hostage Eli Sharabi is from, a new outdoor educational space will give children a place to play, learn and begin to heal from trauma.

In Nir Oz, the ImagineBox Learning & Treatment Space will

provide immersive therapy for emotional recovery, while in Ein Hashlosha JNF will support the establishment of a nature-based trauma garden.

In the north, where thousands were displaced following Hezbollah rocket attacks, JNF Australia will fund a Community Stress Prevention Centre (CSPC) in Kiryat Shmona, while in Misgav Am, located on the Lebanon border and home to 360 residents before the war, JNF is supporting the environmental needs to address the damage that has occurred from burnt forests and overgrowth from months of neglect.

"These projects are not just about rebuilding infrastructure – they're about restoring lives, dignity and hope," said CEO of JNF Australia Doron Lazarus.

To book tickets for JNF Australia's campaign events taking place in September across Sydney, Melbourne and Perth visit www.jnf.org.au. Eli Sharabi will be speaking in Sydney and Melbourne.

JEWISH CHANGEMAKER AWARDS



Who will be our next
36 UNDER 36 ?
Nominate a Changemaker NOW!



Honouring young people making a difference in our community.

www.australianjewishnews.com/changemakers

**NOMINATIONS
CLOSE 30 SEP**

THE Australian Jewish News

