

Israeli-Austrian youth exchange program *Back to the Roots – Spurensuche*

30 June to 9 July 2019

Call for Applications for 15 young Israelis

The Israeli-Austrian youth exchange program *Back to the Roots – Spurensuche*, which is organized by the Austrian NGO GEDENKDIENTST, an association for historical-political education, will take place in Austria between the 30th of June and the 9th of July 2019. The aim of *Back to the Roots* is to promote the exchange between young people from Israel and Austria. This international encounter is framed as a study trip on the aftermath of Nazism and the Holocaust in Austria today. We want to discuss the complexity of history and its effects on the present both on a personal as well as a

collective level by providing personal exchanges, workshops and lectures. Our dealing with the past will be based on the family biographies of all participants. The focus will be on the years 1938 to 1945, however the preconditions of Nazi persecution, the legacy of the Holocaust and its effects on Austrian and Israeli society will be discussed as well. Together we will investigate the connections of the personal Austrian history of the Israeli and Austrian participants and look for traces of different roles that family members played – as victims, perpetrators or bystanders.

We are looking for **15** young Israelis with family connections to Austria who are willing to engage in a challenging confrontation with their family history in Austria during a youth exchange with **10 young** Austrian participants. The program will take place in Austria between the 30th of June and the 9th of July 2019. The requirements for the seminar are the willingness to be part of an in-depth investigation of Austrian history, starting from the own family roots up to Austrian society's role in Nazism and Nazi crimes, as well as an exchange with young Austrians who are interested in investigating their own family traces and connections.

The program offers

- Preparatory workshop in Israel
- International youth exchange based on a confrontation with the history of Nazism and the Holocaust and their effects on contemporary societies
- Guided visit to the Mauthausen Memorial in Austria
- Information about family histories based on research in Viennese archives
- Discussions of family connections to Nazism and the Holocaust of the Israeli and Austrian participants
- Individual visits to places and looking for traces of family histories in Austria
- Mountain hiking tour in the Austrian countryside in the Salzkammergut region

What do we expect from you

- Interest in dealing with Holocaust history with a focus on Austria
- Willingness to engage with the personal family stories of all participants
- To provide information about your family to enable research in Austrian archives, this includes names, dates and places of births as well as other biographical key elements of family members with connection to Austria
- Sufficient English (the entire program will be held in English)
- Age between 18 and 25 years
- Participation in the entire program
- Valid insurance for the stay in Austria

Important information

- All travel expenses and costs for accommodation will be covered.
- The project will start on 30 June 2019 and end on 9 July 2019 in Austria.
- We make every effort to provide Kosher food, vegetarian options will always be available. Shabbat is considered in the program and possibilities for Shabbat dinners will be organized upon request. Please let us know about specific needs, we will try to cover them according to our possibilities.
- **The obligatory preparatory workshop will take place in Jerusalem on 12 May 2019.**

Application

- Send your application form to: backtotheroots@gedenkdienst.at
- Application deadline is: **30 April 2019**
- **The application form is available online at**
<https://gedenkdienst.at/cms/projekte/spurensuche-back-to-the-roots>

A project by Verein GEDENKDIENTST - Association for historical and political education and international dialogue, Margaretenstraße 166 (1050 Vienna, Austria).

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