



The Whys and Hows of Learning Experiences with Arab Society in Israel

Approaches, tools, and resources



on Israeli Arab Issues

Inter–Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues

**Created in 2006, IATF is a
trusted educator for American
Jewish organizations and
leadership on Arab society &
Jewish-Arab relations in Israel.**

The Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues is a coalition of 100 North American Jewish organizations. It was formed by key Jewish American leaders from federations, foundations, religious movements, service and advocacy organizations to promote greater awareness in the North American Jewish community on issues related to Arab citizens and Jewish-Arab relations in Israel.

**This presentation
was made in
September 2023;
prior to October 7.
However, the general
concepts still apply.**

**Please be in touch
or see our follow
up presentation
for best practices
post October 7.**

Part 1: Introduction

Part 2: Arab society in today's context

Part 3: Best practices & framing

Part 4: IATF resources

A follow-up program in upcoming months will build upon today's content.



Why include Arab citizens of Israel (ACI) and Jewish–Arab relations in experiential Israel education?

- 1 Arab citizens make up 21% of Israeli society. Their experiences and well-being are consequential to Israel's society, politics, economy, and future.
- 2 Diversity, equity, and inclusion are interesting and important to many American learners and participants.
- 3 ACI present important focal point for contextualizing and understanding Israel's nuanced complexities.

Best Practices for Educational Programs in Arab Society

1

Setting Up for Success

Prep, framing, and managing expectations

2

Partnering with Arab Speakers and Orgs

Relationships are core to educational work

3

Operating in Arab Society

Awareness of cultural and operational differences

4

Walking the Walk

Tourism as an economic development pathway for Arab society

Setting Up For Success



**Set
Educational
Goals**



**Focus on
Framing**



**Align
expectations**

Setting Educational Goals

- Arab society and Jewish-Arab relations in Israel offer a rich world of dynamic content.
- Engaging with Israeli diversity and presenting different viewpoints may not be specific enough goal.





What are your goals for experiences in Arab society?

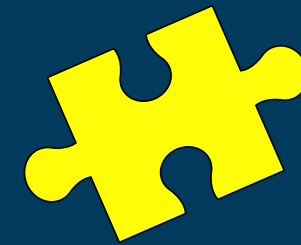


A World of Content



Jewish-Arab Relations

Understand the field of shared society, why it exists, and see it in action.



Politics and Public Discourse

Bring ACI into conversation with broader trends, hot topics, and developments in Israeli society.



Socioeconomic Development

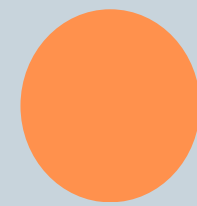
Challenges and opportunities for social mobility for ACI and the potential for Israeli economic growth.



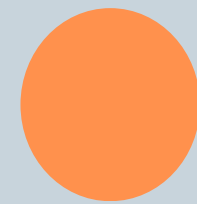
Identity and Culture

How Arab citizens navigate and understand their identity as part of a diverse and vibrant minority community,

ACI have their own unique experiences that are meaningful to explore. Programs on ACI are not a substitute for learning about the broader Israeli–Palestinian Conflict.

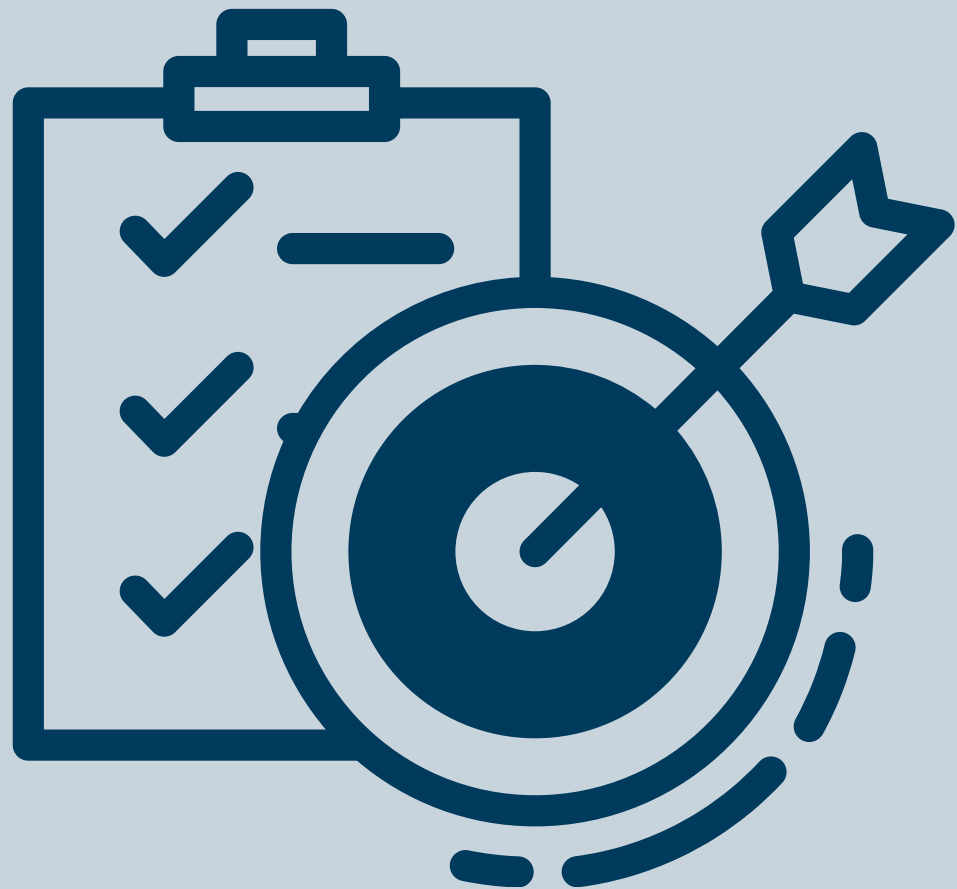


ACI are in a unique position as Israeli citizens with deep familial and historical connections to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.



However, they should not be expected to speak for, or represent, all Palestinians.

Select the best speaker(s) and activities for your goal



1

Learning, meeting, or experiencing?

A mifgash is a great option for connecting with ACI but is not best for gaining literacy on Arab society.

2

Align the experience with the content:

Consider which activity or speaker(s) will best connect with your framing and goals.

3

"Bigger names" are not always better:

University students, an ER doctor, or group facilitator may be better for your situation.

4

Arab and Jewish voices:

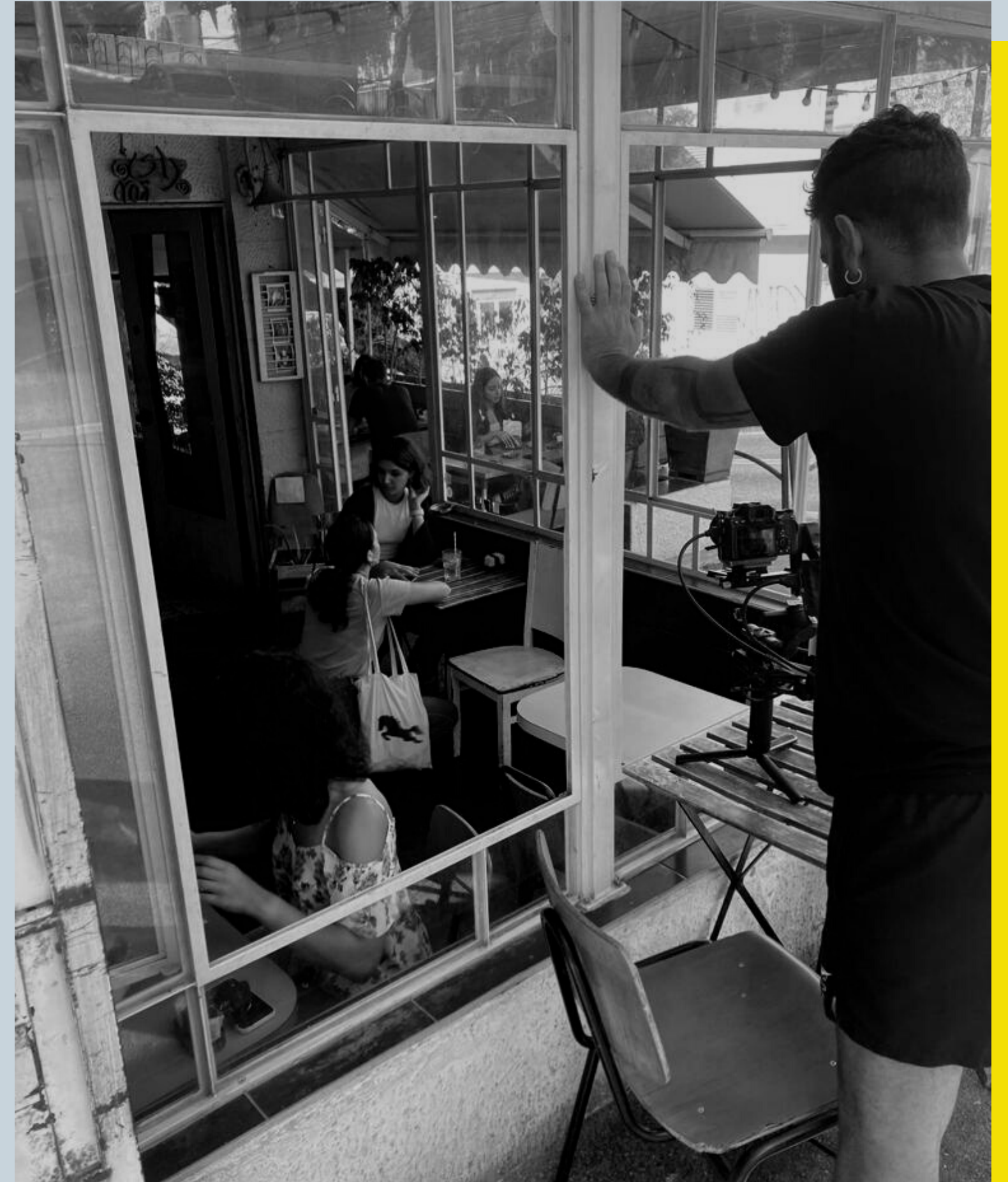
Depending on your focus area and audience it can be effective to hear from Jewish as well as Arab speakers.

Focus on Framing

Two key types of framing for participants:

Framing the Content

Framing the Experience



Framing the Experience



- **Set Expectations for what they may feel or see:** Today you may experience...
- **Resilient Listening:** Listening doesn't mean agreeing. Practice listening openly, even if you feel uncomfortable.
- **Representation:** The speaker is only speaking for themselves. Don't expect them to speak on behalf of all ACI.
- **Ask questions from a place of genuine curiosity:** Avoid “gotcha questions”.
- **Remind participant of relevant values or goals from the broader trip:** hearing diverse narratives, navigating complexity etc.

Framing the Content

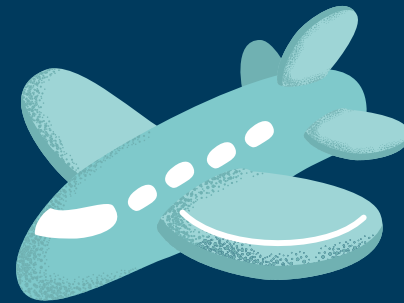
- **Cover the basics:** Giving an introduction about ACI frees up the speaker to focus on their story and expertise
 - It can be helpful to provide the IATF/iCenter Factsheet in advance.
- **Share your educational goal and frame the content:** This is a good reminder for your speaker(s) and sets expectations for your participants.
- **Refer to IATF framing suggestions:** Proven language for keeping programs focused and constructive.



Who's Involved? What might they already know?
What might they assume? What are they hoping to experience?



Program Staff



Participants



Program Partners

Complex Identity

- **ACI expressing a Palestinian identity is about more than nationalism:** It relates to culture, community, familial ties, and historical narratives.
- **Identity contains multitudes:** Rather than asking someone if they identify as x or y, ask them to explain their identity in their own words.
- **Identity is a journey:** Ask people how their identity has evolved throughout their lives and what is shaping it today.



(A frame from
In Between)

Bringing Learners Closer to the Ground

Arab and Jewish citizens continue to wake up in the same place every day.
Good entry points for exploring daily realities include:

Shared Society

Efforts to strengthen Jewish-Arab relations.

Culture & Community

Go local and get to know Arab society.

DEI and Employment

Labor market integration and workplace experience.

Education

How Arab and Jewish citizens learn, and what they learn about each other.

Professional Discourse



Feature Changemakers

Practitioners, activists and leaders can share insights from a dynamic professional field.



Form Connections

When speakers tell their personal and professional stories, it makes the issues come to life.



Highlight Solutions

Showcasing the work being done doesn't shy away from reality...while offering hope and possibilities.

**Professional discourse injects nuance
and emphasizes agency: shifting the
conversation from "good" vs. "bad" to
"how do we move forward?"**



Partnering with Arab Speakers & Organizations



Working with speakers as partners



Prioritizing speaker preparation



Be mindful of speakers' experiences

Center Relationships



Working with Speakers/ Hosts as Partners

- Build relationships with speakers and organizations that extend beyond the individual event.
- Share your organizational motivation, vision, and approach.
- Ask your speaker about why they find value in meeting with American groups.
- Be mindful of how you and your group represent your organization and community in a cross-cultural context.





Prioritizing Speaker Preparation

- **Bring the partner into your thinking:** Share your goals and framing for the program
- **Help the speaker get to know your group:** Their situation in life, familiarity an exposure to Arab society, and interest areas
- **Reminder:** Many Arab speakers may have little familiarity with the American educational context on these topics or the American Jewish community
- **Situate the program:** Share the broader learn arch of the trip and how this experience fits in
- **Share your framing:** Explain how your plan for pre and post program and how you will support the speaker in your opening framing
- **Ask for input:** See if your partner has ideas, concerns, or insights that feel important to share

Be Mindful of Partners' Experiences

- Check-in with partners before, after and during programs to see how they are doing.
 - Challenging current events or personal experiences will shape what a speaker shares.
 - Offer time to debrief and share feedback.
- Be mindful of how holidays, headlines, and cultural moments may be experienced differently in Arab society.
- Try to refer to partners by the identity they use for themselves.
- It can feel vulnerable, emotionally draining, or intimidating to speak to a room of people from a very different background, especially by yourself.



The background is a blue-tinted photograph of a historic stone building. On the left, there is a balcony with a metal railing. Several people are visible: one person is on the balcony, and two others in the foreground are looking up towards the building. The overall scene suggests a historical or cultural site.

IATF Resources

Tailored support based on your organization's needs and context

Trainings for organizations and their staff on integrating ACI and Jewish-Arab relations into their work.

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Support framing events and connecting to relevant **speakers, organizations, site visits, and issue experts.** We also can moderate/ accompany in some instances.

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Organize webinars, events, and brown bags to support your professional development and access to trusted voices

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Partnership development: Consulting and building bridges between American Jewish organizations and partners in the field in Israel.

Bringing new voices from Arab society to your learners:

- A cohort of 8 diverse next-generation **changemakers** in Arab society prepared to be speakers and partners for American Jewish educational organizations.
- Fellows can present on a range of topics pertaining to ACI and Jewish-Arab relations in-person or on Zoom.
- **Meet the Fellows May 28-June 8 in NY, DC, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland.**
- Connect and plan programs with the Fellows **starting March 2024.**



Exploring the Topics of Arab Citizens and Jewish-Arab Relations in Israel

This resource provides useful terminology and snapshots of the daily lives of Arab citizens of Israel. We hope it will spark curiosity and a desire to learn more.

Refer to the Source Sheet Companion for a list of links used to compile this resource, as well as a selection of additional resources for further learning. Note that data on some of the issues explored herein often can be limited and confusing. This challenge reflects some of the complexities of Jewish-Arab relations in Israel.

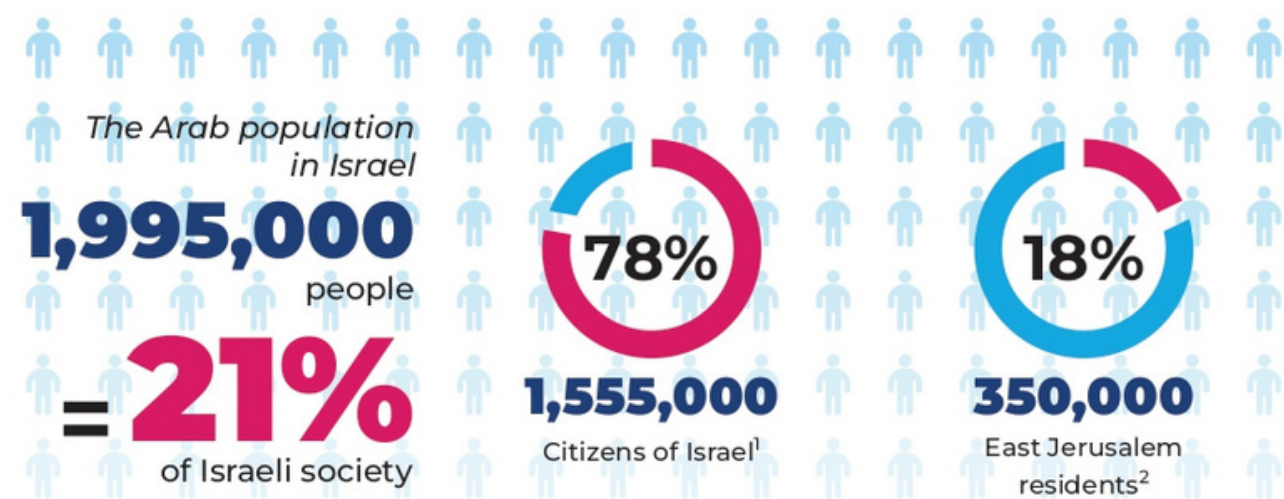
SECTION 1: key terms

How can terms, categories, and identities shape how people understand and interact with each other?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- > Which of these terms have you heard, read, or used before? What was the context?
- > What might a person's choice of term say about their identity or outlook? What about the context they are in?

Most estimates of Israel's Arab population combine citizens and East Jerusalem residents. For more on these distinctions see this chart.



Due to a lack of consistent data, and the exclusion of about 24,000 Golan Druze, these numbers do not add up to 100%.

Encompassing language, culture, history, daily life, and official status, Arab citizens' identities are more nuanced than either "Israeli" or "Palestinian." Members of this population group describe themselves (and are described by others) with many terms. Some common terms include:

**Arab-
Israelis**

**Palestinian
Citizens of
Israel**

**Palestinian-
Israelis**

**Israeli-
Arabs**

**'48-
ers**

**Arab
Citizens
of Israel**

Note: In this resource, we use the term "Arab citizens of Israel" because it describes the language and ethnicity of this population (Arab) and their country of citizenship (Israel) while striving to avoid imposing one identity. Other terms apply to East Jerusalem residents.

IATF Explainers and Discussion Guides

These explainers, with corresponding discussion questions, can be sent in advance to help prep participants for the program context and content or handed out as a resource to correspond with what they are hearing and seeing.

Stay tuned for explainers on a wide range of topics!

IATF Film Discussion Guides

Films and T.V shows can be great windows into Arab society, Palestinian culture, and key topics in Jewish Arab relations. They are particularly helpful when it is not possible to meet with a speaker or arrange a visit.

IATF guides provide context, relevant discussion questions, and a facilitator guide.

We currently have guides for the films ***Oriented*** and ***In Between*** with more on the way!



Staying Informed

IATF has a range of
resources on our issues
for a wide range of
issues and involvement

Weekly media update: A Thursday round-up of
topical and diverse news and opinion articles.

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Newsletters: A compilation of short updates,
recordings, resources, and IATF activities

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Briefing papers: Thorough reports, summaries,
and research pertaining to major issues and
developments

.....

[Sign up for our mailing list](#) to get all of our resources

Thank You & Stay in Touch!

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