

2024 Impact Report

Contents

A message from the AJFN Chair
A message from the AJFN CEO
AJFN Vision, Mission and Support Offerings
AJFN Values
The Australian Fertility Landscape
2024 Impact
2024 Growth
Year In Review - Support Services

Miscarriage and Loss Program

Beneficiary stories

Year in Review - Events, Awareness, Education

A Month of Miracles - Infertility Awareness Shabbat / Sydney Musical Kabbalat Shabbat

A Month of Miracles - AJFN Melbourne Event

A Month of Miracles - Miracle Making Day

Other events - Understanding Endo with NCJWA

Other events - A night with Phil and Sue Lewis

Other events - Boardroom lunch at Arnold Bloch Liebler, Victoria

Other events - Gilly's Challah Bake

Awareness and Education - New AJFN website and Fertility Zone

Awareness and Education - Educational Webinars

AJFN Village

AJFN Board AJFN Professional Team Our Philanthropic Family Our Volunteers

Contact us



A message from the AJFN Chair

As a proud Australian Jew, a grateful mother to three IVF miracles, and Chair of this very special charity, 2024 was a dichotomy of a year.

On one hand, 2024 challenged our community like never before. I have been blown away by the resilience, unity and connectedness shown in the face of this.

On the other hand, AJFN's 2024 was a year of **continued growth,** remaining steadfast in our expansion strategy and role to build Jewish families and hope for the future.

My heart is filled with so much gratitude and pride as we reflect on AJFN's past year. It has been an absolute privilege and joy to be part of AJFN's work; **a light amongst the darkness**. This year has been a testament to the power of community, the unwavering spirit of our village, and the profound difference we can make together.

Now, more than ever, AJFN's role in supporting our community to **build the next generation** is paramount. We walk alongside those struggling to conceive, offering not just a hand, but a village of support, understanding, and hope. With **one in six** couples in Australia experiencing infertility, and an even higher number in the Jewish community requiring fertility assistance due to genetic factors, we know the challenges of building a family touch so many lives. We are honoured by the trust you continue to place in us to walk alongside all Jewish Australians on their journey to parenthood.

Because of you, we've been able to support 110 families in the year. 2024 saw us expand our reach even more; our first official year of AJFN in Melbourne, enhancing our programs, and providing vital support to even more families navigating the complex world of fertility. This impact report reflects the incredible strides we have made together, and it is a true celebration of our shared achievements.



As we approach AJFN's 18th birthday in the coming year, a significant year representing 'Chai' (life), I'd like to acknowledge the foundations laid by so many. We are deeply grateful to those who have contributed their time, resources, and passion over the years, building the very essence of this special charity. Your vision, commitment, and belief in our mission have brought us to where we are today.

None of this impact would be possible **without <u>you</u>** – our incredible donors, volunteers, beneficiaries, AJFN Professional Team, Board and community at large. Your generosity fuels our mission, your dedication inspires us, and your stories remind us of the profound importance of our work.

As we look to the year ahead, we are filled with hope and anticipation. We will continue to innovate, expand our reach, and strengthen our village. We will continue to advocate for greater awareness and understanding of infertility. And most importantly, we will continue to be a **beacon of hope** for those Jewish Australians and their families on their fertility journey.

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for being part of the AJFN Village.

Together, we are not just creating families; we are building our community, one precious life at a time.

Kerry Gonski

AJFN Board Chair & Director

A message from the AJFN CEO

What a privilege it is to spend each day working to ensure that no Jewish Australian ever feels alone on their fertility journey.

This is the feeling that I'm sitting with as we close 2024 - a sense of deep honour to be doing **this** work with **these** people investing in **our Jewish community** and growing the next generation.

It was a big year in many ways for AJFN. We have had to navigate so much as a community while still holding space for our beneficiaries who need us now more than ever before. We welcomed 20 new Jewish babies while providing support for those still navigating loss and complex fertility challenges. And we tried to do it all with grace and humility.

There are many highlights but a few that stand out as particularly rewarding include:

- Our largest giving month ever in February 2024 where we distributed \$40,439 to support 12 families on their fertility journeys.
- Launching our new website in July 2024.
- Developing our use of a CRM so that we can properly report on impact.

This report covers the 12 month period from January 1 to December 31, 2024. During this time we supported **110 families** and distributed **90 financial grants** to the value of **\$245,326**. It's the most impactful year in the history of the organisation.



Regretfully, in 2024, we also farewelled a very special member of our team - Rebecca Abraham. Bec made a significant contribution to AJFN's Support Program, most notably developing and implementing a Miscarriage and Loss Program which has already supported a significant number of families in our Australian Jewish community. Bec will be sorely missed and will always be a part of the AJFN family.

I am incredibly proud of all that AJFN has achieved in the last year. Special thanks to our Chair, Kerry Gonski, our full Board, our professional team -volunteers, donors and community partners. As we look toward 2025 our focus will remain on supporting all Jewish Australians experiencing fertility challenges by providing financial grants, emotional and spiritual support and education and advocacy services so that we can invest in a strong community for the next generation.

Justine SaidmanAJFN CEO

"We cannot thank you and your team enough. We are truly eternally grateful in every single way. This little miracle of ours exists because Hashem/G-d connected us with you - may everyone at the AJFN be blessed always." ~AJFN beneficiary

AJFN Vision

AJFN believes that no Jewish Australian should ever feel alone on their fertility journey.

AJFN Mission

For those Jewish Australians and their families struggling to achieve their dreams of having a baby, the AJFN is a beacon of hope, offering financial, emotional and spiritual support, as well as educational resources, and encouraging open and honest conversations about infertility within the community.

360 Degree Support

Financial support (means tested)



- Financial grants toward the cost of fertility treatments
- Financial grants towards counselling sessions

Spiritual support



- Challah baking
- Mikvah for fertility
- Kosher IVF/IVF with supervision
- Spiritual guidance from a Rabbi or one of our spiritual counsellors

Emotional and mental health support



- Peer Support Companions
- .

Psychologist referrals

- Care packs
- Miscarriage and loss support
- Shabbat meals and challah deliveries

Awareness and education

- Breaking the stigma and opening the conversation
- Advocacy
- Educational events and webinars
- Fertility Zone on www.ajfn.org.au

AJFN Values

As a Jewish organisation, the AJFN is guided by Jewish principles which support our brand values. At the heart of AJFN's work is the importance of Jewish continuity, an integral value now more than ever as we face the darkness in the world and replace it with the light of new Jewish life.



AJFN Brand Value	Jewish Value - English	Jewish Value - Hebrew
Brave - we will push boundaries, we will relentlessly challenge the status quote and never give up.	Courage - the strength of the heart. We aren't afraid of doing what needs to be done even when it is complex and challenging.	Ometz Lev אמץ לב
Genuine Care – we are accessible, nurturing and dependable. Together we are all part of the AJFN family. Whether you are a supporter or receiving our support, we always have your best interests at our core.	Loving Kindness - we actively seek opportunities to engage with others in a caring manner, based on the idea of loving your neighbour as yourself.	Rachamim רחמים Chesed Ton
Knowledgeable - Knowledge is power and we believe in sharing it. We aim to be a trustworthy source of information.	Insight - we seek to understand the complexity of infertility and share knowledge. We believe that sharing wisdom and insight helps build understanding and empowerment, fostering connection between people.	Bina בינה
Community - we are powered by the community for the community.	Social Responsibility - we have a social responsibility to ensure that no Jewish Australian feels alone on their fertility journey and to help build the next generation.	Achrayut אחריוּת
	Community Mindedness - we believe that we are here to support our Australian Jewish community.	Areyvut ערבות

The Australian Fertility Landscape



1 in 6

Families struggle with infertility in Australia and will need fertility treatment.



\$12,000

The average upfront cost per round of IVF - with majority of families requiring at least three rounds for success, and often years of hardship trying.



*1224

Jewish babies are born in Australia each year. At least 1 in 17 of these babies will require Artificial Reproductive Technology (ART).i.e fertility treatments to be created.

*JCA The Jewish Population of Australia Census



Genetics

Due to genetic/hereditary factors, the need for advice, testing and treatment makes the Jewish community one of the highest users of Artificial Reproductive Technology (ART).

"We are so grateful for your support throughout the last 12 months - we feel so blessed to have come across your organisation and it really made such a difference financially and emotionally for us. We had been trying to get pregnant for 2 years before we started IVF so this really is a dream come true."

~ AJFN Beneficiary

2024 Impact



110 families supported22% increase since 2023



26 peer support relationships formed



90 grants distributed64% increase since 2023



\$245,326 grant value **73%** increase since 2023



67 care packs delivered44% increase since 2023



20 babies born

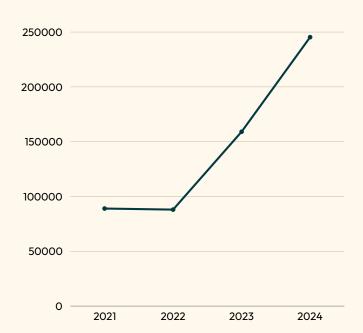


2024 Growth

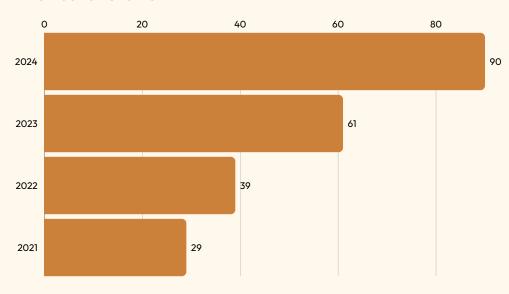
Number of Families Supported

120 100 80 60 40 20 2021 2022 2023 2024

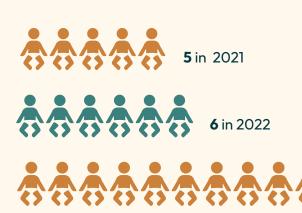
Dollars Provided in Financial Grants



Number of Grants



Miracle Babies Born



11 in 2023

Year In Review - Support Services

Miscarriage and Loss Program

In 2024, we launched the AJFN Miscarriage and Loss Program, a first of its kind in the Jewish community. The program is inspired by Gabbi and Ari Mitchell and their dedication to honouring the memory of their daughter, Stevie Dylan Mitchell, born sleeping in April 2023. The funds for this program come from the Mitchells' Stevie's Swim initiative in September 2023.

- **Updated Peer Support Training:** AJFN Peer Support Companions have undergone specialised training tailored to support families through miscarriage and loss.
- **Specialised Care Packs:** Thoughtfully curated Miscarriage and Loss Care Packs have been created to provide comfort and practical support.
- **Educational Resource:** The AJFN Miscarriage Guide was written in collaboration with Grief and Bereavement Counsellor Terry Diamond. It has reached over 50 families and professionals. The Miscarriage Guide can be downloaded <a href="https://example.com/hereigness-selected-new-months.com/hereig

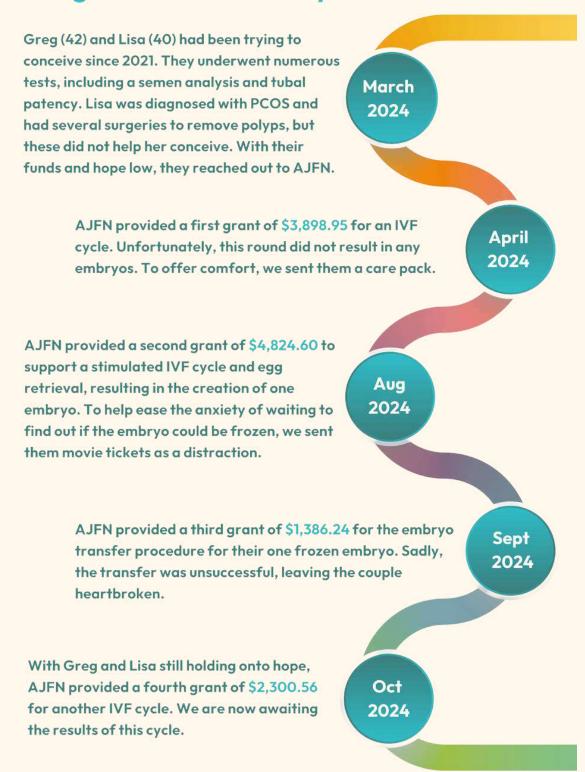
The program will continue to honour Stevie's legacy by offering hope, connection, and compassion to families navigating the profound pain of pregnancy loss for years to come.



Miscarriage and Loss Care Packs

We thank all our generous care pack donors who give us beautiful additions to include in these packs. These care packs offer comfort when it is needed most and truly make a difference to our beneficiaries.

Greg and Lisa's Journey



Total Grants to Date: \$12,410

Alongside their fertility struggles, Greg and Lisa faced rising antisemitism that impacted Greg's business, forcing him to find new work. This added strain, along with IVF costs, has led them to rely on family and friends for additional financial support. AJFN remains by their side, offering continued assistance and we hold them in our thoughts, praying for a positive outcome.

David and Sarah's Journey

Married couple, David (36) and Sarah (36), reached out to AJFN after trying unsuccessfully for two years to conceive. After medical investigations, David discovered he had Azoospermia (no sperm in semen).

Aug 2023

The couple realised they needed to pursue IVF. Sarah started with an egg retrieval procedure, for which AJFN provided a grant of \$3,301.05. David then underwent a micro testicular extraction (an invasive procedure to locate sperm in the semen).

Sept 2023

Unfortunately, David's procedure was not successful, and the couple had to use donor sperm for embryo creation and IVF. Over the next few months, AJFN provided grants totalling \$12,206 towards these procedures.

Oct 2023

Throughout their journey, AJFN offered continued emotional support, including movie tickets to ease the two-week wait (the period after embryo implantation until Sarah could take a pregnancy test), Shabbat and weekly meals to alleviate additional stress, a compassionate Peer Support Companion, and a comforting AJFN care pack.

May 2024

AJFN received the wonderful news that the couple was expecting their first child!

July 2024



If it weren't for AJFN, we wouldn't have been able to hold all the financial, emotional and psychological stress we were dealt. A weight was lifted, and we could focus on our goal of growing our family. Thank you AJFN.

- David and Sarah



A Month of Miracles

Infertility Awareness Shabbat March 2024

Every March, AJFN participates in Infertility Awareness Shabbat, an initiative aimed at raising awareness about infertility within our community and shining a light on the one in six families who often face challenging fertility journeys in silence.

This community-wide effort engages shules, schools, and bakeries across Sydney and Melbourne, who help spread the message of hope and support. Together, we remind those struggling that they are not alone and that reaching out for help is both encouraged and embraced.

To commemorate this special Shabbat, and as part of our Month of Miracles, we also hosted a family-centred musical Kabbalat Shabbat event with Rabbi Yossi Friedman and Ilan Kidron in Sydney, creating a space for connection, reflection and unity.



A Month of Miracles

Musical Kabbalat Shabbat in the Park - Sydney

















A Month of Miracles

AJFN Melbourne Event

In April 2024, AJFN proudly hosted its first official community event in Melbourne as part of our Month of Miracles. This memorable evening welcomed over 160 guests, who enjoyed a delicious dinner, exciting prize giveaways and an exclusive screening of AJFN's powerful documentary, 1 in 6. The audience also heard from fertility specialist Dr Daniel Lantsberg from Melbourne IVF who shared his expertise and highlighted the need for support and community. The event provided an opportunity to share AJFN's vital role in supporting families facing fertility challenges in Victoria.



A Month of Miracles

Miracle Making Day

AJFN's Miracle Making Month culminated in an annual Miracle Making Day with the theme of 'It's more than a life, it's a lifetime', with the goal of raising critical funds to support 125 families on their fertility journeys. Thank you to all our Miracle Matchers, Champions, and donors for supporting this campaign.





Amount Raised \$498,729



Click to play the campaign video

Other events

Understanding Endo with NCJWA

AJFN partnered with the National Council of Jewish Women of Australia (Vic) to address Endometriosis, a vital women's health issue. The event featured Dr. Marina Demyanenko (Melbourne IVF), Mandi Azoulay (Integrative Chinese Medicine Practitioner), and Jessica Bram (lived experience advocate), sharing medical insights, holistic approaches, and personal stories. The recording is available to <u>watch</u> on our Fertility Zone.







A night with Phil and Sue Lewis

AJFN was honoured to have our dear friends and Melbourne Founding Partners, Phil and Sue Lewis, host an intimate and informative event in their home to share the vital work of AJFN with their peers. Special thanks to Phil and Sue for graciously opening their home and creating a space for meaningful connection. Thank you to AJFN beneficiaries, Rob and Britt Miller, for sharing their fertility journey with such eloquence and emotion. Your story touched everyone present and beautifully highlighted the impact of AJFN's work.







Other events

Boardroom lunch at Arnold Bloch Liebler, Victoria

AJFN's long standing supporters, ABL, hosted an informative boardroom lunch introducing AJFN to a Melbourne audience eager to learn more about our impactful work within the community. Thank you to Romy and Noah Borensztajn for sharing their intimate IVF journey and Rebecca Zwier from ABL for spearheading this initiative.







"I was impressed that there was a clear problem to be solved, analysis had been done, and a multiplicity of solutions brought to bear to assist Jewish families struggling with IVF, whether the challenges be financial, medical, emotional, or all of the above."

- Dr Alan Finkel, ABL event attendee

Gilly's Challah Bake

AJFN partnered with Gilly's ELC in Melbourne for an intimate challah bake. This event featured Adina Werdiger who spoke about the spiritual significance of baking challah as Jewish women and Dr Genia Rozen, fertility specialist at Genea who spoke on the topic of Secondary Infertility. Watch Adina's <u>speech</u> and Dr Rozen's <u>talk</u> on the AJFN Fertility Zone.







It was also pretty emotional but such a beautiful film and event in general. I brought my parents, sister and a friend and they were all blown away with the film and speakers, they found it really informative and inspiring.

~ Melbourne event attendee

Awareness and Education

New AJFN website and Fertility Zone

2024 saw the launch of the brand new AJFN website. The website features the AJFN Fertility Zone, including articles, videos, podcasts and more to help those going through their journey, a new eCard platform and more streamlined tools to get support.





Educational Webinars

AJFN webinars play a crucial role in the fertility education space. Our aim is to keep our audience informed on the latest fertility developments and support available.

Let's Talk About Miscarriage

Miscarriage is the most common pregnancy complication. One woman in Australia suffers a miscarriage every five minutes. This suffering is usually done silently. In June 2024 AJFN hosted an informative webinar featuring Dr Devorah Lieberman from City Fertility Sydney, Journalist and Author of the book "Hard to Bear", Isabelle Oderberg and a personal story by couple Daniel and Samantha Stuk. Watch the <u>recording</u> on the Fertility Zone.

Let's Talk About Male Factor Infertility

For 50% of couples infertility is caused by male factors. Lifestyle choices, medical conditions, genetics, environmental factors and more may play a role in a man's ability to conceive. In November 2024, AJFN hosted a powerful webinar featuring A/Prof Katz (Urological Surgeon and Male Fertility Microsurgeon), Dr Leah Hechtman (Naturopathic Clinician and Director of Natural Health and Fertility) and Reece Conca (former AFL star), who shared his personal story with Male Factor Infertility. Watch the <u>recording</u> on the Fertility Zone.

Thank you to our volunteer and head of our Education Committee Kim Leigh, for always going above and beyond to arrange these webinars and keep AJFN on the forefront of education and support in the fertility space.

AJFN Village AJFN Board



Kerry GonskiAJFN Board Chair
and Director



Nir GolanAJFN Director and

Treasurer



Rebecca ZwierAJFN Director and
Secretary



Kate Mohr AJFN Director



Lara GarfinkelOutgoing AJFN
Director



Dr Lesley AndrewsOutgoing AJFN
Director



Omer Samuni Board Observer

2025 Board Updates

In 2025, we bid farewell to two long-standing AJFN Board Directors, Dr Lesley Andrews and Lara Garfinkel.

Lesley's invaluable expertise in medicine and genetics has been pivotal in shaping AJFN's support services, enabling us to meet the unique needs of every family we assist. Lesley will continue to be part of the AJFN family in 2025 by helping establish and serve on the new AJFN Medical Advisory Council. Lesley, your legacy of professionalism, care, and compassion as part of our Board will leave an everlasting impact.

Lara, our inaugural Company Secretary, played a pivotal role in AJFN's establishment as a registered charity with ACNC accreditation and DGR1 status. Her dedication extended beyond governance, as she also volunteers as a kind and caring Peer Support Companion, a role she will continue even as her board term ends. Thank you Lara for all you have done for AJFN.

Thank you for your wisdom, guidance and all you have done to grow AJFN into the organisation it is today.



Kate Samowitz 2025 Board Director

We are incredibly excited to welcome the talented **Kate Samowitz** to the AJFN Board of Directors in 2025. Kate is a Senior Executive with 20 years of experience in global consumer brands, communal organisation volunteer, Jewish community advocate, and mum to three miracle babies.

Inspired by her own infertility journey, she has been a longstanding member of the AJFN family, serving as Marketing Committee Chair, Peer Support Companion, Events Committee Member, and now as a Board Director, driving AJFN's strategic growth in marketing and communal engagement.

AJFN Village AJFN Professional Team

Justine Saidman - CEO

Jessi Cohen - Head of Support

Romy Rosen - Marketing and Communications Manager

Sarit Braver - Development and Engagement Manager, Melbourne

Nicola Tkachenko - Support Coordinator, Sydney

Team Updates

In 2024, we bid farewell to our Support Manager, Rebecca Abraham. During her time with AJFN, Bec established our Miscarriage and Loss program and supported hundreds of families with her unwavering care and compassion. Her contributions have left an indelible mark on our community and we are deeply grateful for the role she played in her time at AJFN.

Towards the end of 2024 we welcomed our new Sydney Support Co-ordinator, Nicola Tkachenko. Nicola is excited to join the AJFN Sydney team as the Support Coordinator in Sydney. Having had her own fertility story, she is hoping to accompany and support those experiencing challenging fertility journeys. She aims to offer empathy, information and practical support.



AJFN Village Our Philanthropic Family

Major Donors

Diamond

Evolution Capital Leor and Mendy Amzalak Robin and Tony Mitchell The Kalinko Family The S&C Roth Family **Foundation**

Platinum

Alan and Elizabeth Finkel **Foundation** Ashlyn and Larry Diamond **Besen Family Foundation** Ilana and Martin Moshal **R&S Tatarka Family Foundation** Terry and Rob Lederer The Yarranabbe Foundation

Gold

Aliza and Rafi Lamm Anonymous AJFN Angels Eva and Paul Lederer Judy and Steve Lowy Kerry and Michael Gonski Lauren and Elliott Placks Lisa Farber & Justin Liberman and family Sandra and Barry Smorgon Sue and Phil Wolanski The Gonski Foundation The Grosman Family **Foundation**

Silver

Bendigo Bank Community Bank / Caulfield Park **Gandur Family Foundation**

Melbourne Founding Partners

Phil and Sue Lewis The ERDI Foundation

Corporate Partners

IVFAustralia Melbourne IVF Genea

City Fertility, Sydney

Event Sponsors

Arnold Bloch Liebler **Bondi Family Dentist Detector Inspector**

Evolution Capital Gaia Natural Baby

Horizon

Jesse's Bakery Melbourne IVF

Woolworths Bondi Junction

Raffle Prize Donors

Arms of Eve Balala

Gel by Bel Nails Gem

Studio Ma Tahini Neri

Be Active

Henela

Tan Towel The Antique Silver Company

Ben Simon

House

Better Together Kitchen

James Vivian Kit Collection

Mana Hair

Nava

The Integrative Nutritionist - Romy Bursztyn

Beyond Organic Bloom

Lenny's Fine Foods

The Yoga Space Trading in Style

Bondi Dental

Lulu

Tuchuzy

Bryoni's Hair

Vision Direct Bondi

Chucka Debbie Weinmann Wicked Sista Yoga Atma

Ceramics

Rabbi on Demand Rain Room

Zoe Frenkiel Professional Make Up

AJFN Village

Our Philanthropic Family

Care Pack Donors

Cachia

Daniella Gozlan

Danielle Michaels (B.Box)

Jessi and Cat Cohen

Jessica Steingold (JS Health)

JNF

Nicola Sepel (Florabelle Living)

Nikki Horowitz (Tonic)

Nourish Organic Marketplace

Shaun Greenblo (Boody)

Thread Together

Community Partners

CCare

Eshel Fine Kosher Catering

Kraus Foods

Millee's Deli

Our Big Kitchen

Pita Mix

Ritz and Classic Cinemas

Rivka's Kindness

Souper

The Bagel Co

Probono Supporters

Arnold Bloch Liebler

Creative Clarity

Governance Australia & Asia

Jeremy Ungar

Kelly + Partners

Norton Rose Fulbright

SherpaWorks

The Bottom Line

Terry Diamond

Our Volunteers

Peer Support Companions

Alexis Cohen

Belinda El Boher

Daniel Stuk

Gabrielle Rein

llan Agranat

Jared Keen

Jenna Nathan

Joanne Star

Judith Bauerberg

Kelly Ludski

Lara Garfinkel

Lauren Siegel

Leah Swersky

Leigh Goldberg

Lisa Kirstein

Martine Chait

Michelle Lewis

Natalie Zilber

Navah Rosenblatt

Rebecca Havas

Robbie Clifford

Rosalie Simson

Rozanne Ichikowitz

Samantha Stuk

Event Committees

Emma Gerber

Joanne Star

Kate Samowitz

Lauren Placks

Robyn Davis

Romi Israelsohn

Romy Borensztajn

Tanya Hamersfeld

Tanya Keyser

Education Support

Candice Stein

Jenna Pinchuk

Kim Leigh

Tali Feiglin

Melbourne Thinktank

Kate Mohr

Leora Givoni

Monica Kempler

Rebecca Zwier

Marketing Support

Leigh Goldberg

Kate Samowitz

Kerry Gonski



If you are experiencing a challenging fertility journey,

please know that you are never alone. We are here for you.

Please reach out in complete confidence.

Text: 0481 075 554

Email: support@ajfn.org.au

Call: 02 7906 8366 (Sydney) or 03 8840 6560 (Melbourne)

www.ajfn.org.au









AJFN is fully compliant with all requirements of The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), the national regulator of charities. We are a registered charity with DGR1 status—all donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible. ABN 90630127061

To access AJFN's financials and key documents, please visit the ACNC website at www.acnc.gov.au.