The Israeli Social Platform

Haredi IDF Veterans Excellence

Elite Leadership & Career Pipeline
for Ultra-Orthodox Veterans



THE ISRAELI SOCIAL PLATFORM

From Military Service to National Leadership

An Excellence
and Leadership Initiative
for Ultra-Orthodox IDF Veterans

Executive Summary

A growing number of ultra-Orthodox men are enlisting into the IDF; they conclude their service with demonstrated discipline, resilience and leadership potential. Yet many lack the academic foundations, vocational networks and economic safety net needed to translate those strengths into influential civilian careers. Thus, this important process is approaching an inflection point.

The Vision and the Solution:

The Israeli Social Platform (formerly Yedidut Toronto) is developing an exclusive pathway for excelling ultra-Orthodox veterans. Rather than focusing solely on rapid employment, the initiative will offer these outstanding young adults with lucrative and rigorous academic programs, mentoring and career development opportunities in rewarding industries such as technology, engineering, finance, government and other strategic sectors. Our theory of change is simple: by enabling exceptional veterans to become credible role models and leaders, a "serving elite" will be formed, facilitating systemic and robust change.

Theory of Change and Program Structure:

The model combines proactive talent identification, occupational-psychological assessment, tailored academic support, performance-linked living stipends, senior executive mentorship, a peer network and employer engagement. It builds on the organization's existing experience supporting ultra-Orthodox students and graduates, while adapting the pathway to the specific realities of IDF veterans.

Scope of the pilot:

The proposed pilot of this initiative will comprise a cohort of 50 participants over four years; a longer-term expansion scenario contemplates 350 participants across three intake cohorts.

50 participants ⟶ 4 years

longer-term ⟶ 350 participants ⟶ 3 intake cohorts.











The Organization

The Israeli Social Platform - Established by Yedidut Toronto is an Israeli nonprofit organization founded in 2008 to improve the quality of life of underserved individuals, families, and communities. The organization develops and operates practical, evidence-based programs that address interconnected emotional, social, and economic challenges. Our work is guided by the belief that lasting change requires more than short-term assistance and must strengthen both individuals and the systems surrounding them.

The Israeli Social Platform's principal areas of activity include **emotional wellbeing and resilience, economic mobility and employment development, family support, and the promotion of safe and healthy relationships.** Its programs assist children, parents, educators, young adults, women, families experiencing financial hardship, and culturally distinct communities that may face barriers in accessing conventional services. Interventions are adapted to the participants' social, cultural, and practical circumstances, with particular attention to accessibility, dignity, and sustained participation.

$500M+	+0.048%	450,000	8
Invested in social impact	Annual GDP growth from our programs	People positively impacted across Israel	Proven models scaled by government

Since its establishment, the organization has directly supported more than 450,000 children, parents, educators, young adults, and family members throughout Israel.

Its experience includes operating emotional support and resilience programs in hundreds of educational and community settings, providing family and parental guidance, supporting people in entering or advancing within the labor market, and developing prevention and safeguarding initiatives.

The organization has also demonstrated the ability to mobilize professional networks and implement complex programs rapidly across multiple locations.

The organization works in close partnership with Israel's Government ministries, including the Ministry of Welfare Services, the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Education. We are also working closely with Israel's National Insurance Institute, as well as with dozens of municipalities. Among our philanthropic partners are the Friedberg Family Foundation, the Ted Arison Family Foundation, the Jewish Federations of North America, the Jewish Federation of New-York, the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto, the Samis Foundation, the Nitzan Foundation, the Abraham and Sonia Rochlin Foundation, and others.

Through these partnerships, it combines direct services with professional training, community-based implementation, ongoing supervision, and structured measurement and evaluation.

This approach enables the organization to respond to immediate needs while also developing models that can be replicated, expanded, and integrated into public and community systems.

The Need & The Challenge

According to official IDF data, regarding the enlistment of ultra-Orthodox men.

2,811 (2024)

An increase of +53%

4,298 (2025)

According to the IDF's official data, 4,298 ultra-Orthodox men enlisted in 2025. This is a 53% increase compared to the relevant number in 2024 (2,811).

Future Outlook

5,300 (2026-9) / 2,400 expected to have academic potential.

According to the current growth trend, IDF officials anticipate roughly 5,300 ultra-Orthodox young adults concluding a full IDF service during 2026-2029, of whom 2,400 are expected to have academic potential.

Employment is not the same as mobility

The challenge is not simply whether these young adults will join the workforce, as 81% of ultra-Orthodox veterans are employed, according to statutory data. Most of them are employed in entry-level positions and can be characterized as "underemployed". Rather, the challenge lies with their ability to develop a career, as the IDF builds their sense of responsibility, technical capability and leadership. However, these strengths do not automatically translate into academic admission, professional credentials or employer access.



Compounding barriers

Some veterans arrive with substantial gaps in mathematics, English and digital literacy, limited familiarity with academic norms and little exposure to the workforce. Others face pressures of marriage, parenthood and immediate income needs. It is important to note that within the ultra-Orthodox community, IDF service is still taboo, thus rendering these young adults into outcasts in their own communities and families. These experiences vary considerably; the initiative is designed to respond to individual circumstances rather than assume a uniform veteran profile.

The transition from the IDF into a career represents both a risk and a strategic opening. Without timely guidance and adequate support, high-potential individuals may choose immediately available but low-mobility employment. With the right pathway, their service experience can become a foundation for advanced study, professional achievement and wider civic contribution.



Others face pressures of marriage, parenthood and immediate income needs.

The Response

We propose a five-stage pathway:

1 Identify exceptional potential

Proactive outreach through veteran networks and associations will engage candidates with strong records in technology, combat, command and other military roles. The program will be positioned as an excellence and leadership track, not a remedial service.

2 Assess and personalize

Vocational psychologists and assessment specialists will evaluate cognitive readiness, interpersonal skills, resilience and leadership potential. For each selected participant, an individualized academic and career plan will be developed, offering clear milestones.

3 Bridge the academic gap

An intensive preparatory pathway will address mathematics, advanced English, digital literacy and learning strategies. Living stipends are intended to reduce the need for parallel employment and enable sustained academic effort. Tuition and preparatory-course costs are expected to be covered through separate public funding arrangements.

4 Sustain excellence through higher education

Participants will pursue demanding degrees or equivalent vocational training pathways, supported by individual tutoring, semester-by-semester progress monitoring, senior professional mentors and a peer community that reinforces identity and belonging.

5 Accelerate careers and leadership

From the second year, participants will be connected to quality student positions and leading employers. Career workshops, executive networking and guidance toward research, graduate degrees, public-sector cadet programs and core professional roles will support progression beyond the first job.

The design intentionally combines individual investment with institutional connections. Its intended multiplier is not simply the number of graduates, but the example and opportunity networks those graduates may create. We offer a seven-year pilot, comprising three cohorts.

The organization's existing ultra-Orthodox academic program provides a particularly relevant foundation, as it yielded over 5,000 graduates across 35 academic institutions. No less than 79% of our graduates enter degree-requiring roles, with an annual attrition of approximately 7%, and 18% progressing to advanced degrees.

We thus propose longitudinal, participant-level monitoring from initial assessment through academic study and entry into employment. Its planned management system will record selection, individualized milestones, academic progress, mentoring, student employment and post-graduation outcomes.

Evaluation & Measurement

Within 12 months:

100%

admission to leading, high-productivity study pathways among program participants.

By 48 months:

85%+

complete with an average grade of 85 or above; target attrition is 7%.

Within 36 months:

65%+

obtain student positions aligned with their field of study.

Within 18 months of graduation or training completion:

85%

enter development, management or other core professional positions.

Longer - term:

25%

progress to advanced degrees or public leadership tracks.

Proposed performance targets

National socioeconomic return and community multiplier: will track the modeled recovery of public investment within four years of graduates entering qualifying employment, through incremental tax receipts and productivity gains. Assess the wider community ripple effect, with a target of more than 40% growth in IDF enlistment and access to high-quality employment among participants' families, measured against a documented baseline and appropriate comparison period.

The evaluation will also assess job quality, salary progression, employment persistence, career advancement and participants' sense of agency and belonging.

Economic returns and community-level outcomes will be tracked separately from individual program results, with findings tested against baseline data rather than inferred from prior programs.

Program Economics

The proposed model is a concentrated investment in academic attainment, professional placement and long-term leadership potential. Its largest direct investment is performance-linked living support, enabling participants to pursue demanding education pathways.

Socioeconomic return on investment (SROI). The program's high-intensity model requires substantial upfront investment, particularly in living stipends that allow participants to concentrate on demanding academic study. The rationale draws on the organization's established academic mobility programs, whose graduates are estimated to contribute approximately NIS 650 million annually to Israel's GDP. Earlier analyses also estimate that the public investment per student can be recovered in less than four years through additional tax revenues and economic output. For this new veteran-focused initiative, those figures are a benchmark, not a verified forecast: graduates will be guided toward high-productivity roles in technology, engineering and finance, with an indicative starting-salary target of NIS 12,000-14,000. The program will test whether these career pathways can narrow the reported 30%-40% sectoral wage gap and generate comparable long-term economic and social returns.

Seven-year implementation scenario | Three intakes | Four years of support per participant

Item	$
Talent sourcing and assessment	229,785
Living stipends and contingency support	12,507,591
Academic excellence and leadership support	498,350
Career systems, communications and evaluation	318,152
Program delivery and staffing	2,603,168
Contingency and overhead	1,311,952
Total	**17,468,998**



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