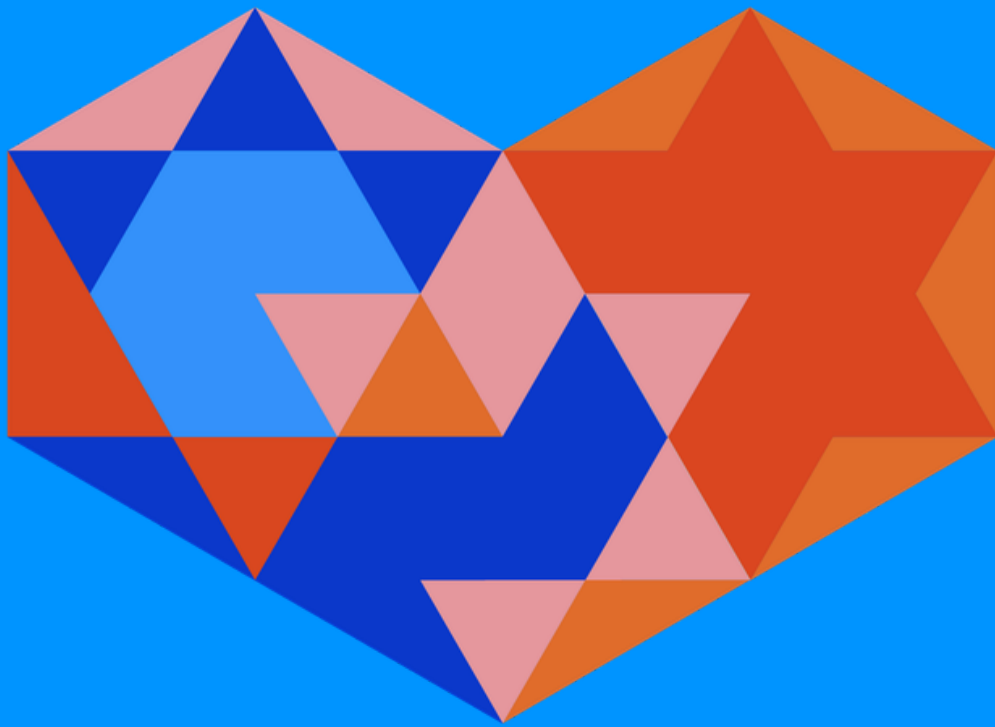


European Days of Jewish Culture 2026



אהבת ח'נים | AHAVAT CHINAM
LOVE CROSSES BORDERS
One Family, Many Voices
Rosh Hashanah 5787 - 2026

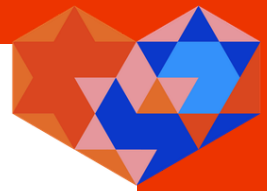
Project proposal for inclusion in the European Days of Jewish Culture 2026

Curated by

aepj
jewishheritage

Cultural route
of the Council of Europe
Itinerarium culturel
du Conseil de l'Europe





אהבת חינוך | AHAVAT CHINAM
LOVE CROSSES BORDERS
One Family, Many Voices
Rosh Hashanah 5787 - 2026

Project proposal for inclusion in the European Days of Jewish Culture 2026

6 - 30 September 2026

Online activity - Zaragoza, Aragón, Spain

An original project by Asociación Cultural Sefarad Aragón

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project overview

Ahavat Chinam – Love Crosses Borders is an international digital outreach and Jewish heritage project created by Asociación Cultural Sefarad Aragón for the European Days of Jewish Culture 2026.

The project responds to the 2026 theme, LOVE, by connecting the small contemporary Jewish presence in Zaragoza with Jewish communities, cultural associations and heritage organisations in different countries on the occasion of Rosh Hashanah 5787.

From Zaragoza, Sefarad Aragón will send a specially designed Shanah Tovah greeting by email, introduce recipients to the city's remarkable Jewish history and offer them a digital guide to the historic Jewish quarter.

Recipients will be invited to reply with:

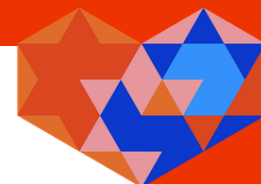
- Their wishes for the Jewish people in 5787.
- Whether they have previously visited Zaragoza.
- Whether they were familiar with its Jewish history.
- Whether they would like to visit the city in the future.

The project transforms geographical distance and Zaragoza's small local Jewish presence into an opportunity for international connection.

Its central message is:

In Zaragoza we are few, but we remember that we are part of a Jewish family living in cities, countries and continents throughout the world.





CONTEXT AND ORIGIN

A small Jewish presence with an outward-looking vision

Zaragoza does not currently have a large organised Jewish community or a resident rabbi. Its contemporary Jewish presence is small and dispersed. However, the absence of a large communal structure does not mean that Zaragoza should remain outside an international celebration of Jewish culture. **It is precisely this reality that inspired the project.**

Large, established Jewish communities can naturally create activities for their own members, local audiences and visitors. **Zaragoza's circumstances invited Sefarad Aragón to imagine a different model: instead of waiting for audiences to come to us, we will symbolically leave the city and reach out to Jewish communities around the world.**

The project begins with a simple conviction:

A community does not need to be large to create connection, share memory or contribute meaningfully to Jewish life.

Through this initiative, Zaragoza becomes both sender and host:

- It sends love and good wishes for the new Jewish year.
- It shares the memory of its Jewish heritage.
- It listens to the voices of communities in other countries.
- It opens a door to future relationships and visits.

ALIGNMENT WITH EDJC 2026 - LOVE as a force of connection

Ahavat Chinam – Love Crosses Borders interprets love primarily as a force of connection between communities.

The project reflects the EDJC 2026 theme in four complementary ways:

• Love between communities

Jewish communities and organisations separated by geography recognise one another as part of a shared people.

• Love expressed through memory

Zaragoza shares its Jewish heritage not as a closed chapter of medieval history, but as something capable of generating relationships in the present.

• Love expressed through hospitality

Even when recipients cannot travel to Zaragoza in person, they are invited to enter the city through its digital Jewish heritage guide.

• Love expressed through words

The exchange of Shanah Tovah greetings transforms a simple message into an affirmation of belonging, continuity and mutual recognition.



JEWISH CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

אהבת חנינם - Ahavat Chinam

The project takes its name from the Jewish ethical concept אהבת חנינם - Ahavat Chinam. It can be understood as freely given love: a willingness to approach another person with care and openness without first demanding proximity, recognition, agreement or personal benefit.

The concept developed in Jewish thought as a response to שנאת חנינם - Sinat Chinam, the causeless hatred that rabbinic tradition associates with the destruction of the Second Temple.

In this project, Ahavat Chinam does not mean sentimental love, the erasure of differences or the absence of healthy boundaries. It means choosing connection where indifference or isolation could otherwise prevail.

Three additional Jewish values shape the project:

חסד - Chesed: Lovingkindness made concrete through action. The project does not merely speak about love; it creates a practical gesture of welcome and connection.

הכרת הטוב - Hakarat Hatov: Recognising and acknowledging the good received from others. Every response will be received with gratitude and acknowledged by Sefarad Aragón.

כל ישראל ארים זה בזה - Kol Yisrael arevim zeh baze: "All Israel are responsible for one another." Jewish belonging extends beyond a single city, institution or country.

The exchange is therefore reciprocal but not transactional. Sefarad Aragón does not share its heritage as a condition for receiving a response. It offers the guide as a gift. Those who wish to reply complete the circle by sharing their own voice and blessing.

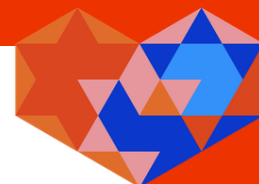
ZARAGOZA'S JEWISH HERITAGE

A city with a significant Jewish intellectual legacy

Although Zaragoza's contemporary Jewish presence is small, the city holds a profound place in the history of Jewish thought, spirituality, ethics and law. The project will introduce recipients to Zaragoza through figures including:

Abraham Abulafia: Born in Zaragoza in 1240, Abraham Abulafia became the founder of the school commonly known as Prophetic or Ecstatic Kabbalah.





Bahya ben Joseph ibn Paquda: Bahya ibn Paquda lived and worked in Zaragoza and is remembered as the author of Chovot HaLevavot - The Duties of the Heart, one of the foundational works of Jewish ethical and spiritual literature.

Solomon ibn Gabirol: Born in Málaga, Solomon ibn Gabirol spent important formative and intellectually productive years in Zaragoza, which was then a major centre of Jewish culture.

Hasdai Crescas: One of the leading Jewish philosophers and rabbinic authorities of the late Middle Ages, Hasdai Crescas was closely connected with Zaragoza and became a central leader of the Jews of Aragón.

Isaac ben Sheshet Perfet - the Rivash: The Rivash, one of the most important medieval halakhic authorities, served as rabbi in Zaragoza before later settling in other cities.

The campaign's historical message will therefore begin:

From Zaragoza - birthplace of Abraham Abulafia, home to the work of Bahya ibn Paquda, a decisive city in the life of Solomon ibn Gabirol and a city connected with Hasdai Crescas and the Rivash - we send our warmest wishes for 5787.

PROJECT RATIONALE AND THEORY OF CHANGE

From a local limitation to an international opportunity

Context

Zaragoza possesses an important but internationally under-recognised Jewish heritage. At the same time, its contemporary Jewish presence is too small to sustain the kind of large local programme organised in cities with established communities.

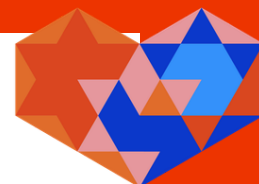
Opportunity

Digital communication allows a small cultural association to reach Jewish communities directly, share reliable heritage resources and create meaningful exchanges without requiring a venue, travel or a large budget.

Action

Sefarad Aragón sends a carefully researched and visually designed Shanah Tovah message to a curated international network of Jewish communities and cultural organisations.





Immediate outputs

- Communities receive a greeting from Zaragoza.
- Recipients discover the Jewish history of the city.
- The digital guide reaches new international audiences.
- Sefarad Aragón receives greetings and information from other cities.

Short-term outcomes

- Increased awareness of Zaragoza's Jewish heritage.
- New international contacts for Sefarad Aragón.
- A visible sense of Jewish connection across borders.
- Measurable participation in the European Days of Jewish Culture.

Long-term potential

- Future cultural collaborations.
- Visits to Zaragoza.
- Continued relationships with participating institutions.
- A replicable model for other European cities with small or dispersed Jewish populations.

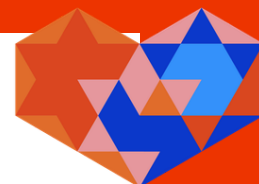
OBJECTIVES

General objective

To increase international awareness of Zaragoza's Jewish history and heritage by using Rosh Hashanah and the EDJC 2026 theme of LOVE as an opportunity to create relationships with Jewish communities and organisations in different countries.

Specific objectives

1. Send a Shanah Tovah greeting from Zaragoza to Jewish communities, associations and cultural organisations internationally.
2. Present Zaragoza as a city with a significant and internationally relevant Jewish intellectual history.
3. Share an accessible digital guide to the historic Jewish quarter of Zaragoza.
4. Invite recipients to send their own wishes for the Jewish people in 5787.
5. Identify the cities and countries from which responses are received.
6. Discover whether recipients were previously familiar with Zaragoza's Jewish history.
7. Identify people and organisations interested in visiting Zaragoza in the future.
8. Create new institutional relationships for Sefarad Aragón.
9. Represent Zaragoza in the European Days of Jewish Culture through an original, low-cost and internationally oriented project.
10. Document the process and results in a professional final report.



SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

Activities included

- Development of the project concept and narrative.
- Creation of the project's visual identity.
- Research and preparation of a curated international contact database.
- Production of the Spanish and English campaign texts.
- Segmentation of contacts by country, language and type of organisation.
- Sending the campaign by email in controlled batches.
- Sharing the official digital guide to the Jewish quarter of Zaragoza.
- Receiving and acknowledging replies.
- Recording participating cities, countries and organisations.
- Monitoring delivery, responses and meaningful engagement.
- Preparing a final project report for Sefarad Aragón and the AEPJ.
- Preparing an public summary if the level of participation justifies it.

This defined scope keeps the project manageable, transparent and consistent with the resources available.

TARGET AUDIENCES

Primary audiences

The international outreach database will prioritise:

- Jewish communities.
- Jewish cultural associations.
- Jewish heritage organisations.
- Jewish museums and interpretation centres.
- Sephardic cultural organisations.
- Jewish education organisations.
- Organisations involved in preserving European Jewish heritage.
- Rabbinic, academic and cultural institutions with an interest in Sepharad.
- Organisations with previous connections to Sefarad Aragón.
- Jewish professionals and cultural leaders within the existing networks of the project team.

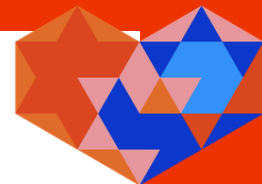
Geographic approach

The project will have a European foundation and an international reach.

Contacts will be organised in geographic batches:

- Europe.
- Israel.
- The United States.
- Latin America.
- Other countries with active Jewish or Sephardic organisations.

The priority is to build a curated and relevant network in which every recipient has a clear institutional or cultural connection with the project.



PARTICIPANT JOURNEY

How the project will work

1. Receiving the greeting

Each recipient will receive a clearly identified email from the dedicated Sefarad Aragón project address: eventos.sefaradaragon@gmail.com

The email will include the project design and a warm Shanah Tovah message from Zaragoza.

2. Discovering Zaragoza

The message will briefly introduce Zaragoza's Jewish intellectual heritage and include the official link to: La Judería de Zaragoza Paso a Paso Texts by Susana Lozano Gracia and Asunción Blasco Martínez.

3. Entering the city from a distance

Recipients who cannot visit Zaragoza in person will be invited to explore the city through the guide.

The message will explain:

If you cannot visit us yet, we invite you to discover Jewish Zaragoza through this guide. When you are able to come in person, we will be delighted to welcome you and show you our city.

4. Responding

Recipients will be invited, but not required, to tell Sefarad Aragón:

- What they wish for the Jewish people in 5787.
- Whether they have ever visited Zaragoza.
- Whether they previously knew about its Jewish heritage.
- Whether they would be interested in visiting in the future.

5. Being acknowledged

Every meaningful reply will receive an acknowledgement from Sefarad Aragón.

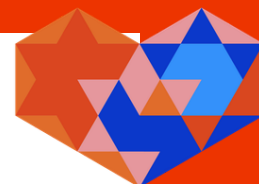
6. Becoming part of the project's results

Cities, countries and participating organisations will be documented. Messages will remain private unless explicit permission is received to quote or publish them.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Tone - The communication will be:

- Warm but institutionally appropriate.
- Jewish in content without assuming a particular level of observance.
- Historically grounded.
- Concise enough to encourage reading and response.
- Honest about the contemporary Jewish reality of Zaragoza.
- Free from political or commercial content.



Languages

The principal versions will be prepared in:

- English, for international outreach.
- Spanish, for Spain and Spanish-speaking countries.

Sending method

The campaign will be sent in small, controlled batches rather than as a single mass mailing.

This approach allows:

- Personalisation by country or institution.
- Better management of a newly created Gmail account.
- Monitoring of bounced emails.
- Protection of recipient addresses.
- Reduced risk of messages being classified as spam.
- Adjustment of the message if early feedback identifies any problem.

Emails will be sent individually, through a controlled mail-merge process or using blind-copy procedures that prevent recipients from seeing other addresses.

No large attachment will be included. The heritage guide will be shared through its official link.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Phase 1 - Official launch - 6 September 2026

- Launch the project on the opening date of the European Days of Jewish Culture.
- Begin the first international email batches.

Phase 5 - Main pre-Rosh Hashanah outreach - 6 -10 September 2026

- Send the main Shanah Tovah communications.
- Monitor delivery and early replies.
- Correct invalid or bounced institutional addresses.

Rosh Hashanah pause. From sunset on 11 September until nightfall on 13 September 2026. No project emails or operational communications will be scheduled during Rosh Hashanah.

Phase 6 - Responses and follow-up - 14 - 25 September 2026

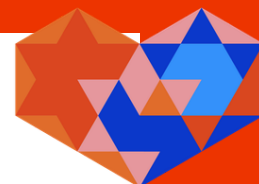
- Continue appropriate regional batches.
- Send no more than one polite follow-up where relevant.
- Acknowledge replies.
- Record participating countries, cities and organisations.

Phase 7 - Closing and documentation - 26 -30 September 2026

- Close the active response period.
- Consolidate the results.
- Request permission to quote selected messages, if applicable.

Phase 8 - Final report - October - November 2026

- Produce the internal project report.
- Submit the official EDJC activity report and feedback.
- Prepare a public summary if participation justifies it.



GOVERNANCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Asociación Cultural Sefarad Aragón: Sefarad Aragón is responsible for the institutional identity and public representation of the project.

Timna Segal - President, Asociación Cultural Sefarad Aragón

Responsibilities:

- Institutional approval.
- Historical and cultural review.
- Approval of final public materials.
- Oversight of the project's representation of Sefarad Aragón.

Project management: Maggie Haller - International Projects

Project concept, design and coordination

Responsibilities:

- Project design and planning.
- Development of the narrative and content.
- Preparation of the AEPJ application.
- Visual communication coordination.
- Creation and management of the contact database.
- International stakeholder outreach.
- Segmentation and execution of email batches.
- Response management.
- Monitoring and documentation.
- Risk management.
- Preparation of the final report.

AEPJ relationship: The European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage will be asked to:

- Review the application.
- Include the project in the official EDJC 2026 programme.
- Provide any relevant communication guidance.
- Receive the final activity report.

Inclusion in the programme will not imply operational or financial responsibility on the part of the AEPJ.

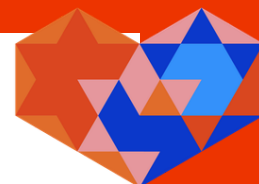
DATA PROTECTION, CONSENT AND SECURITY

Data minimisation

The contact database will use primarily:

- Publicly available institutional email addresses.
- Professional contact details connected with an institutional role.
- Contacts voluntarily provided by Sefarad Aragón.
- Existing professional relationships relevant to the project.

Only information necessary for the campaign will be recorded.



Purpose limitation

Contact information will be used exclusively to:

- Send the Shanah Tovah project message.
- Manage responses.
- Continue a relationship only when there is mutual interest.

Recipients will not be automatically subscribed to a permanent newsletter.

Confidentiality

- Recipient addresses will never be visible to other recipients.
- The database will not be shared publicly.
- Replies will remain private by default.
- Names and direct quotations will not be published without explicit permission.
- Public reporting may use aggregate information such as countries, cities and numbers of responses.

Security

The activity is entirely online and will not disclose:

- Private homes.
- Religious meeting locations.
- Personal schedules.
- Information about local Jewish individuals.
- Any location that could create a security concern.

The address supplied in the AEPJ application is an administrative correspondence address, not the venue of a public event.

Participation by minors

The campaign is addressed to institutions and adult professional contacts. It does not intentionally collect information or images from minors.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Measurement principles

Because this is an asynchronous online project, Sefarad Aragón will distinguish clearly between outreach, reach and active participation.

Outreach

The number of communities and organisations contacted.

Confirmed reach

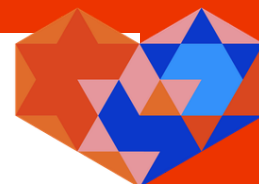
Messages successfully delivered to valid institutional addresses.

Active participation

Communities, organisations or individuals who send a meaningful response.

Geographic reach

The number of cities and countries represented among contacts and responses.



Indicators

The final report will document:

- Number of institutions and communities contacted.
- Number of valid emails delivered.
- Number of countries and cities reached.
- Number of replies received.
- Number of participating organisations.
- Geographic origin of responses.
- Number of recipients who already knew Zaragoza.
- Number of recipients who had previously visited Zaragoza.
- Expressions of interest in a future visit.
- Optional messages authorised for public quotation.

Working targets

These figures are planning indicators rather than guaranteed participation results:

- A curated outreach list covering at least 15 countries.
- Between 60 and 100 relevant institutional contacts.
- A successful delivery rate of at least 90%.
- Meaningful responses from at least 8 countries.
- At least 12 substantive greetings or institutional replies.
- Acknowledgement of 100% of meaningful responses.
- Completion of one final evaluation report.

Reporting integrity

The project will not present all contacted organisations as participants.

The number submitted to the AEPJ as online participants will be based on actual responses or other clearly demonstrated active engagement.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk: Low response rate

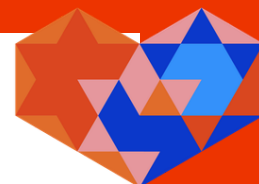
Mitigation

- Use a curated rather than generic contact database.
- Personalise messages where possible.
- Combine institutional contacts with trusted professional networks.
- Keep the requested response simple.

Risk: Email deliverability or spam classification

Mitigation

- Test the new Gmail account before the official launch.
- Send small batches over several days.
- Avoid large attachments.
- Use clear institutional identification.
- Monitor bounced emails.
- Avoid excessive sending volume.



Risk: Historical inaccuracy

Mitigation

- Use established historical and academic references.
- Credit the authors of the Zaragoza guide.
- Avoid overstating uncertain biographical connections.

Risk: Misrepresentation of Zaragoza's Jewish reality

Mitigation

- State transparently that Zaragoza has a small contemporary Jewish presence.
- Present Sefarad Aragón accurately as a cultural association.
- Avoid describing it as the formal Jewish community of Zaragoza.

Risk: Limited project resources

Mitigation

- Maintain a clearly defined scope.
- Use existing digital tools.
- Establish measurable but realistic targets.
- Make any public summary dependent on actual participation.

EXPECTED IMPACT AND EUROPEAN ADDED VALUE

Cultural impact

The project introduces international audiences to a Jewish history of Zaragoza that remains little known outside Spain. It presents Jewish heritage as a living source of identity, relationship and hospitality rather than solely as a subject of historical commemoration.

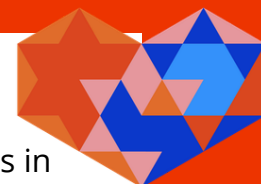
Jewish communal impact

Ahavat Chinam creates a symbolic network around a city without a large contemporary Jewish communal structure. It affirms that **Jewish belonging can be maintained across distance and that small Jewish presences remain connected to the wider Jewish people.**

European value

The project contributes to the European Days of Jewish Culture by:

- Connecting Jewish organisations across national borders.
- Activating a lesser-known part of European Jewish heritage.
- Demonstrating an accessible digital participation model.
- Extending EDJC engagement beyond a local physical audience.
- Creating a low-cost model that may be replicable in other small cities.
- Linking medieval Jewish heritage with contemporary Jewish life.
- Encouraging future cultural mobility and heritage visits.



Innovation

The project's innovation does not depend on complex technology. Its strength lies in using a familiar tool — email — with a clear cultural purpose, careful segmentation, strong narrative and measurable outcomes.

It turns a simple Shanah Tovah greeting into:

- An act of Jewish connection.
- A heritage interpretation tool.
- An international relationship-building activity.
- A documented cultural project.

LEGACY AND CONTINUITY

Beyond a single email campaign

The project is deliberately limited in scale, but it is designed to create value beyond September 2026.

Its potential legacy includes:

- A verified international contact network for Sefarad Aragón.
- Greater visibility for Zaragoza's Jewish heritage.
- Future visits from individuals and organisations.
- New relationships with Jewish cultural institutions.
- A reusable project methodology.
- A documented case study for future EDJC editions.
- An evidence-based portfolio of international cultural project management.

The project will be considered successful even if its most important result is not numerical.

A meaningful response from a community that had never heard of Jewish Zaragoza may become the beginning of a relationship that continues beyond the European Days of Jewish Culture.

RESOURCES AND BUDGET

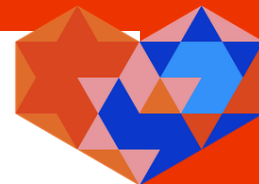
Human resources

The project requires:

- One project manager responsible for planning, communication, implementation and reporting. (Maggie Haller - Volunteer Project Manager)
- One institutional lead responsible for review and approval.

Digital resources

- Dedicated Gmail account.
- Canva design tools.
- Spreadsheet-based contact and response register.
- Sefarad Aragón website.
- Official online guide to the Jewish quarter of Zaragoza.
- AEPJ communication and registration platforms.



Direct costs

The activity is designed to have minimal or no direct implementation cost. Its principal resources are contributed in kind through:

- Project management.
- Institutional oversight.
- Research.
- Design.
- Communication.
- Existing digital infrastructure.

The exact direct expenditure and estimated in-kind contribution will be documented in the final report.

Accessibility

- Participation is free.
- No registration is required.
- No travel is required.
- No specialist technology is required.
- Recipients can participate by replying directly to an email.
- The heritage resource remains available after the active project period.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Project title: אהבת חינוך - AHAVAT CHINAM – Love Crosses Borders

Subtitle: One Family, Many Voices. Shanah Tovah 5787

Organiser: Asociación Cultural Sefarad Aragón

Activity type: International digital outreach and Jewish heritage exchange

Format: Online

Project dates: 6-30 September 2026

Location: Zaragoza, Aragón, Spain

Administrative correspondence address:

Casa de las Culturas

Calle Palafox 29

50001 Zaragoza

Spain

This is an administrative correspondence address. The project does not have a public physical venue.

Project contact: Maggie Haller

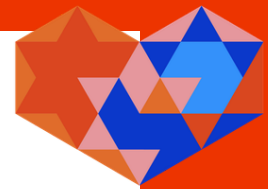
International Projects

Project concept, design and coordination

Email: eventos.sefaradaragon@gmail.com

Website: www.sefaradaragon.org

REQUEST TO THE AEPJ



Request for inclusion

Asociación Cultural Sefarad Aragón respectfully requests the inclusion of Ahavat Chinam – Love Crosses Borders in the official programme of the European Days of Jewish Culture 2026.

The project offers:

- A direct and meaningful interpretation of the 2026 theme, LOVE.
- A transparent response to the reality of a small contemporary Jewish presence.
- An international model of participation.
- A connection between historic Jewish heritage and living Jewish relationships.
- A measurable and professionally managed activity.
- A low-cost and potentially replicable format.
- A new opportunity to make Zaragoza visible within the European Jewish heritage landscape.

In Zaragoza we are few, but we are part of a family that lives throughout the world.
We send our good wishes, share our memory and open the doors of our city.

REFERENCES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

European Days of Jewish Culture 2026

European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage.

European Days of Jewish Culture 2026: LOVE

<https://jewishheritage.org/edjc/european-days-of-jewish-culture-2026-love>

Organisers and coordinators. AEPJ.

The European Days of Jewish Culture — Organisers and Coordinators

<https://jewishheritage.org/edjc/organisers-and-coordinators>

Zaragoza Jewish heritage. Sefarad Aragón. Judería de Zaragoza

https://sefadaragon.org/Juderia_Zaragoza.html

Digital guide: Susana Lozano Gracia and Asunción Blasco Martínez.

La Judería de Zaragoza Paso a Paso

<https://sefadaragon.org/images/0%202025/2024%20Guia%20JUDERIA%20ZARAGOZA%20Paso%20a%20Paso.pdf>

Rabbinic source: Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 9b. Rabbinic discussion of causeless hatred and the destruction of the Second Temple. <https://www.sefaria.org/Yoma.9b.8?lang=bi>

Abraham Abulafia. National Library of Israel. Abraham ben Samuel Abulafia

<https://www.nli.org.il/en/a-topic/987007257298305171>

Bahya ibn Paquda. Jewish Encyclopedia. Bahya ben Joseph ibn Pakuda

<https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/2368-bahya-ben-joseph-ibn-pakuda>

Solomon ibn Gabirol. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Solomon Ibn Gabirol

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ibn-gabirol/>

Hasdai Crescas. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Hasdai Crescas

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/crescas/>

Isaac ben Sheshet Perfet. National Library of Israel. Isaac ben Sheshet Perfet - the Rivash

<https://www.nli.org.il/en/a-topic/987007263110705171>

