



**PRESSEERKLÄRUNG**

**From Generation to Generation: Nathan Peter Levinson Foundation begins its Work – Liberal and Conservative Rabbi and Cantor Training in Potsdam on the Rise**

The Nathan Peter Levinson Foundation has officially begun its work. The foundation's mission is to ensure high-quality, transparent academic training for liberal and conservative rabbis and cantors. Within the foundation, three seminaries have been established: the Regina Jonas Seminary for liberal rabbinical training, the Abraham J. Heschel Seminary for conservative (Masorti) rabbinical training, and the Louis Lewandowski Seminary for cantor training. The University of Potsdam intends to recognize the foundation as an affiliated institute.

Rabbi Prof. Yehoyada Amir has taken on the rabbinical leadership of the Jonas Seminary, while Rabbi Prof. Bradley Artson will head the Heschel Seminary. Members of the foundation's advisory board include Rabbi Prof. Elisa Klapheck, Rabbi Nils Ederberg (both from the General Rabbinical Conference), Dr. Rebecca Seidler (Jewish Liberal Egalitarian Union), Dr. Josef Schuster, RA Daniel Botmann (both from the Central Council of Jews in Germany), and Prof. Oliver Günther (University of Potsdam). The foundation's management (executive board) will be led by Dr. Dmitrij Belkin. The Central Council of Jews in Germany is the foundation's benefactor.

With the start of educational activities under the auspices of the Nathan Peter Levinson Foundation, a long phase of turbulence and uncertainty surrounding liberal and conservative rabbinical and cantor training in Germany is set to come to an end. Since allegations of abuse of power surfaced in May 2022, discussions about these training institutions have continued without resolution.

By establishing the Nathan Peter Levinson Foundation as a new alternative training structure, the Central Council of Jews is following [the recommendations of the religious constitutional law expert Prof. Gerhard Robbers](#), whose report was completed in spring 2023. A foundation rooted in the religious community ensures transparent operations in close cooperation with the School of Jewish Theology and Jewish Studies at the University of Potsdam.

Dr. Josef Schuster, President of the Central Council, emphasizes: "It is important that students have clarity. Today is a good day for rabbinical and cantor training in Germany and a good day for the Jewish communities in our country. The Levinson Foundation is a center of Jewish religion and thought. The new training for liberal

and conservative rabbis and cantors in Potsdam embarks on a promising future and opens important international horizons and networks within liberal and conservative Judaism.”

The new foundation is named after liberal Rabbi Nathan Peter Levinson (1921–2016), who began his studies in 1940 at the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums (Academy for the Science of Judaism) – today the Leo Baeck House, which also houses the Central Council of Jews in Germany. In 1941, he and his family managed to escape from Germany to the United States at the last moment. After the Holocaust, he returned to Germany in 1950, played a key role in founding the College of Jewish Studies in Heidelberg, and became a significant voice in the Jewish community of the Federal Republic of Germany. He passed away in Berlin in 2016. Rabbi Levinson epitomizes the new foundation's motto: "From Generation to Generation" / "Ledor Wador."

For more information about the Nathan Peter Levinson Foundation and its seminaries, please visit the foundation's [website](#).

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