

# ACJC NEWSLETTER

After the devastating end to 2025, we at ACJC have doubled down on what we do best: researching and teaching about the Jewish experience in all its facets. One of the best ways to combat antisemitism, hatred and discrimination is through education, and we're proud to be at the forefront of efforts to teach thousands of young people and to shape national understandings of Jewish culture.

The new academic year will commence soon, and we have around 1000 students enrolled in our range of units, from the Bible through to contemporary Jewish culture.

Our team is set to continue growing, and our work in critical areas such as antisemitism, constructive dialogue and Jewish thought will be crucial in helping Australians understand more about our religion, history, culture and community.

We look forward to sharing a productive and peaceful year ahead with you.

Regards, **David Slucki, ACJC Director**

## A MESSAGE FROM ACJC'S ADVISORY COUNCIL



**Dr Alan Finkel AO, Chair**

Australia ended last year reeling from the Bondi massacre, and started 2026 furiously debating the merits of the Federal Government's hate speech legislation.

Throughout the heated debates, ACJC has contributed to the fundamental discourse through its deep-dive research into the causes of antisemitism in contemporary Australia. We've been able to develop our antisemitism research program without compromising our ongoing research and teaching programs because of the generosity of our donors.

We're now expanding our remit by building sectoral training programs for executive leadership, informed by our research. The importance of these programs was validated by government funding for our university training programs announced in the wake of the Bondi massacre.

The combination of deep-dive research into the causes of antisemitism in sectors of Australian society, followed up by informed training programs, is starting to make an important contribution, of which my fellow council members and I are immensely proud.

We offer our congratulations to all the staff at ACJC and our appreciation to all of our supporters for making this possible.

## MIRRA UPDATE

### Monash Initiative for Rapid Research into Antisemitism

MIRRA is making truly rapid progress – from publishing our second report, [A Framework for Addressing Antisemitism in Australian Universities](#), to consulting widely with sector and government organisations, expanding our antisemitism training with support from the federal government, and presenting our findings at national and international conferences and forums.

We've also been engaging with media on developments such as the Bondi attack, the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion, and the cancellation of Adelaide Writers' Week.

As demand for our research grows, we're expanding our work into more sectors this year, including healthcare, sport, law, business and others. 2026 is shaping up to be a busy year for MIRRA!

## BRAVE CONVERSATIONS



**Dr Daniel Heller and Dr Farid Zaid, Co-Directors**

In the wake of the Bondi massacre, the work of the Brave Conversations Project feels all the more urgent. We remain undeterred in advancing our mission for universities to become places where we can strengthen democratic practices of dialogue, care and constructive disagreement in times of fear and division.

This past December, we led a two-day retreat for university educators, preparing participants to serve as facilitators and to embed Brave Conversations practices into their curricula. In February, we're also convening a five-day national retreat for undergraduate student leaders from across the country, and will be providing them mentorship throughout the year to support Brave Conversations initiatives on their campuses.

With the support of Monash's Vice Chancellor, we continue to run our popular "Teaching Through Tension" university educator workshops, and are partnering with the Department of Home Affairs to run similar workshops in universities in Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth.

## STUDENT UPDATE



**Esther Gyorki, Higher Degree Research student**

My research, which is part of the MIRRA project, is very much in the early stages. I'm looking at how museums address antisemitism, particularly in Australia. This topic builds on my experience working in galleries and museums, and my interest in them as places for gathering, connection and education.

Building on the 2025 MIRRA report on Antisemitism in the Cultural and Creative Industries, Dr Lauren Chalk and I will be co-authoring an article on the relationship between museums and antisemitism later this year. I look forward to continuing to share my learnings and research.

## EVENTS



### **Why Context Matters in Care**

**Monday 23 February, 7–8pm, St Kilda Hebrew Congregation**

Occupational therapist Dr Jennifer Budman and paediatrician Professor Sharon Goldfield will discuss cultural perspectives on maternal health, ADHD and health promotion. Moderated by ACJC's Dr Dan Heller. [Register here.](#)



## **International Women's Day event: At the Helm – Jewish Women in Leadership Post-Oct 7**

**Thursday 5 March, 6–8pm,  
Caulfield location**

This panel discussion, hosted by MIRRA researcher Dr Lauren Chalk, will explore the experiences of Jewish women and femme leaders amid heightened antisemitism. With Monash Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Allie Clemans, Glen Eira Mayor Cr Simone Zmood, author Lee Kofman, JCCV CEO Naomi Levin and Besen Family Foundation CEO Tabitha Lovett. [Register here](#).



## **Professor Zachary Kaufman: Upstanders**

**Tuesday 10 March, 6.30 – 8.00pm,  
Melbourne Holocaust Museum**

Professor Kaufman, Director of the Initiative on International Law at the University of Florida, will present his original and comprehensive typology of upstanders. His work builds understanding of genocide upstanderism, and aids in the development of legal and policy tools to prevent genocide. [Register here](#).

## **WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE FELLOWSHIP**

ACJC's Jacob G Rosenberg Writer-In-Residence Fellowship, in partnership with Melbourne Jewish Book Week, is now open for applications.

Rosenberg was a poet, storyteller, memoirist and concentration camp survivor whose work bears profound witness to the Holocaust and its aftermath. After immigrating to Australia, he became a prolific and award-winning writer, leaving a celebrated literary legacy after his passing in 2008.

The Fellowship honours his legacy by supporting emerging or early-career writers – including poets, playwrights and authors – whose work explores Jewish themes such as memory, history, identity, language and culture.

[Information and application details here.](#)

## MEDIA

### Some of our recent media:

**Noè Harsel**, ACJC's Senior Policy Advisor, reflects on cancellation culture and its impact on antisemitism: [SBS Hebrew](#) with Mariel Olenski, 26 January.

**David Slucki**, ACJC Director, on the Antisemitism and Social Cohesion Royal Commission: [ABC Religion & Ethics](#), 9 January 2026, and in a panel discussion on God Forbid on [ABC Radio National](#) with James Carleton, 23 January.

**Mali Rezaei**, ACJC researcher, delves into the broader context surrounding recent developments in Iran: [ABC Religion & Ethics](#), 7 January.

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