JCCV
Guidelines for Interfaith Dialogue

The JCCV Guidelines for Interfaith Dialogue have been developed to assist the Jewish Community engage in meaningful and productive interfaith dialogue for the benefit of the Jewish and entire Victorian communities.
Contents

A. Purpose of this document .................................................................2
B. What is Interfaith Dialogue? ..............................................................3
C. Why should the Jewish community engage in Interfaith Dialogue? ........3
D. Role of the JCCV ...........................................................................5
E. Guidelines .................................................................................5
   Guideline 1: Set a BROAD Objective for the Interfaith Dialogue ........5
   Guideline 2: Set a SPECIFIC objective for your Interfaith Dialogue ......6
   Guideline 3: Consider the Nature of the event to achieve the objectives ...7
   Guideline 4: Agree whether rules are necessary and what they should be ...8
   Guideline 5: Create a measure to determine whether the event has been successful ... 9
   Guideline 6: Prepare for Interfaith Dialogue ......................................10
   Guideline 7: Identify behaviour which justifies the termination of Dialogue 11
   Guideline 8: React appropriately when inappropriate behaviour occurs ....11
F. Follow up Activity/On Going Dialogue ...........................................13
G. Conclusion ....................................................................................13

APPENDIX 1: Jewish Support for Interfaith Dialogue ..........................15
   Support Available from the JCCV ....................................................15
   A one-page fact sheet on Judaism ....................................................15

APPENDIX 2: Successful Interfaith Activities .......................................16

APPENDIX 3: Suggested topics and events for an Interfaith Dialogue ..........18

APPENDIX 4: Post-Interfaith Dialogue Community Awareness Form ..........19

The JCCV would like to acknowledge the assistance and support of all those who participated in discussions about these Guidelines and contributed directly to this document. In particular, the JCCV thanks Mr. George Lekakis, Chairperson of the Victorian Multicultural Commission, for his insightful review.
A. Purpose of this document

The JCCV Guidelines for Interfaith Dialogue (ID) are intended to be a tool available to JCCV affiliate organisations and others involved in or considering ID. They should be adapted or selectively applied as befits each interfaith situation. Each ID is different so prescribing a particular approach would be counter-productive. The JCCV encourages you to draw on these guidelines and on the vast experience of the Jewish community to have a meaningful, productive and enjoyable ID.

The purpose of this document is to assist groups to have more meaningful interfaith interactions by using an objectives-based approach to ID.

Jewish participants should first agree on the outcome they want from the dialogue. Then they can arrange the nature and format of the dialogue that will best achieve that outcome following which they can reach agreement on specific objectives and the format with others.

Input for these Guidelines was received from the spectrum of religious and social organisations whose participants have been involved in ID for many years. It is a living document which should be regularly revised to ensure it adapts to the environment in which ID takes place.

B. What is Interfaith Dialogue?

The term ‘Interfaith Dialogue’ is used in this paper to refer to multifaith and interfaith dialogues. The term ‘Dialogue’ is used to refer to any formal or informal communication between groups of people organised for the purpose of interacting with people of differing faiths. ID is not a political dialogue and should not be based on a platform of political discussion. Accordingly, so far as the Jewish community is concerned, it does not involve Middle East politics or other political matters, but relates to community issues such as youth, town planning, religious practices and the like. Most importantly, it is likely to involve discussion about issues that each community face in common.

Of course, discussions about the Middle East may arise but they should not be at the core of the ID. Other political issues may also arise during the course of interaction, especially once a relationship has been built and trust has been established, but it is not recommended that such issues form the foundation of the ID.

C. Why should the Jewish community engage in Interfaith Dialogue?

A brief consideration of the reasons why ID is important can inspire us to consider the objectives of our particular dialogue. These reasons, and in fact this document have been developed in the knowledge that we are just one of a very vast number of different religious, cultural and racial communities that comprise Victoria’s wonderfully diverse
multifaith and multicultural society. The JCCV as a peak body, many of our community organisations and indeed many of our individual community members interact with people from varying backgrounds in a range of different contexts. This is to be encouraged and we all need to realise the important role that ID (on every level) plays in promoting understanding and social cohesion between diverse communities.

It is also important to realise that ID can and must take place at all age levels. It is important that we as a community actively encourage our youth to become involved in ID and provide the opportunities for them to do so. Our youth are the leadership of tomorrow and, for this reason, it is essential that we bring them into the domain of ID as early as possible.

**Improve Understanding of Jews and Non-Jews**

At its most basic level, ID allows Jews and non-Jews, who otherwise might never meet, to speak face to face. Further, it provides an opportunity to engage with other faith groups in robust discussion about Judaism and many of the issues we as a Jewish community face. This combats antisemitism by increasing understanding, dispelling myths and overcoming negative stereotypes. It also often reveals that similar issues are faced by other communities.

**Personal Growth**

ID creates an environment where Jewish and non-Jewish ideas and beliefs are shared to enhance mutual respect and develop personal relationships. It encourages us to reflect on our religious engagement and to grow as individuals.

**Contribute to Australia’s multicultural harmony**

ID allows the Jewish community, European Australia’s equal oldest faith group, to make a positive contribution to the harmony of Australia’s multicultural society and strengthen the standing of Jews among national, state and civic leaders.

**Set an example of cooperation that can be followed internationally**

Australia’s unique multicultural mix and relatively peaceful co-existence affords an opportunity to set an example of how people of differing faiths can cooperate on projects of mutual interest.

**Win support for common causes**

ID makes it more effective and efficient to coordinate efforts among faith groups on areas of common needs or values (e.g. fighting racism in all its forms, promoting social justice, environmental issues, animal rights etc.)
D. Role of the JCCV

The JCCV seeks to assist Victorian Jewry and the wider Victorian community by providing a coordinating role for ID. Organisations intending to conduct interfaith activities are encouraged to report the following to the JCCV:

- Upcoming events;
- Event date, nature and purpose;
- Participants from all communities; and
- Outcomes in accordance with the Awareness Form questionnaire in Appendix 4.

Such reporting would be voluntary and the JCCV would certainly not attempt to exercise any control over the event. The purpose of this reporting is so that the JCCV can foster cooperation between groups that are seeking similar engagements and to share the learning and materials that may already exist. It is also of tremendous benefit for our community to develop a comprehensive understanding of people from other faiths with whom we are having the dialogue. Ultimately, the reporting will assist the Jewish community to identify which types of ID are successful, set realistic expectations for such events and develop a useful list of contacts from other faiths.

As the peak body of the Victorian Jewish community, the JCCV relies on the input, experience and support of the community’s many individuals and groups involved in ID. The JCCV wishes to promote meaningful and goal-orientated ID through the following practical steps:

- Build a calendar of upcoming events and a record of past ones.
- Provide appropriate representation when the roof body of another community organisation is involved.
- Collect reports on previous ID to construct a repository of the community’s interfaith activities for the reference of those re-engaging with the same group in the future.

E. Guidelines

Guideline 1: Set a BROAD Objective for the Interfaith Dialogue

ID is enhanced when a clear objective is agreed on before the project commences as it will influence many decisions (e.g. topics of discussion, whom to invite, location for the dialogue etc.). Setting objectives ensures that expectations are aligned for all participating parties and they become a reference point should difficulties arise during the dialogue.

An objective should always be agreed within the Jewish participating organisation. When the dialogue is more formal, objectives should also be agreed with the other participant groups, in writing whenever practical. However the objectives agreed with participating
parties may differ from those set by the Jewish organisation. For example, an internal objective may be to “increase the understanding of Judaism by educating others” but the objective agreed with the other group might be “to promote harmony between the Jewish and Hindu communities through greater understanding and education”.

The following is a list of objectives which may apply to your ID or may spark additional objectives that are more suited to your situation. How formal the recording of these objectives should be will depend on the situation. It may be comprised of a verbal agreement or it may be reduced to a a written, signed agreement. This will often depend on the nature of the dialogue and the identity of the other party to the dialogue.

Some examples of goals that successful groups have used are:

Internal

- Create a public and positive role for the Jewish community.
- Protect the local Jewish community by countering racism and misinformation.
- Improve the understanding of Judaism amongst other faiths to reduce antisemitism.
- Improve Jewish understanding of other faiths in order to reduce stereotyping and prejudice.

External

- Promote harmony within Australia for all minority groups.
- Encourage respect, understanding and education between faiths.
- Enable coordinated responses on key issues to be submitted to government.
- Encourage personal and spiritual development through discussions with other faiths.
- Break down the barriers, misunderstandings and misconceptions between different groups.

Guideline 2: Set a SPECIFIC objective for your Interfaith Dialogue

Guideline 1 involves setting a broad objective that will underpin the ID. Before embarking on a particular project, it is useful to clarify more specific objectives for your project. These often refer to the participants involved and the manner in which the objectives will be achieved.

Some examples of how groups have converted broad objectives into specific objectives are:

**BROAD OBJECTIVE: Promote harmony within Australia for minority groups**

- A school-centred ID used “Promote the ideas of tolerance and anti-discrimination to all students, regardless of their faith”.

6
A dialogue of young communal leadership used “Foster understanding between leaders of different faiths by running a Multifaith Leaders program”.

A dialogue that occurred close to a community event used “Promote ‘Harmony Day Festival’ to celebrate cultural diversity and cohesion between Australian communities”.

A women’s interfaith group used “Focus on developing mutual respect amongst women of different faiths”.

**BROAD OBJECTIVE: Create a public and positive role for the Jewish Community**

- A popular specific objective is to “Illustrate that the Jewish community enthusiastically embraces communication with other faiths”.

- A politically-active interfaith group set the objective of “Issuing a joint statement that reaches across traditional religious or political communal divides to show such agreement is possible”.

- A tangible objective of a group was “Publish a regular newsletter to promote communication between faiths”.

- A University group set their goal as “Visiting Malaysia to consider ways of deepening interreligious research and programming in our university”.

- Another goal may be to consider the provision of emergency relief or aid following an emergency situation.

**OBJECTIVE: Protect the local Jewish community by countering racism and misinformation**

- A Rabbinic group sought to “Create a basic level of knowledge about Judaism by presenting Judaism 101 to clergy in training”.

- A body of community representatives used “Attend interfaith conferences to develop personal relationships which spread understanding”.

- A socially-aware group used “Encourage secondary school students to intervene during acts of bigotry, racism and bullying”.

- Another goal may be to develop joint media releases, representations or submissions to government on issues of racism.

**Guideline 3: Consider the Nature of the event to achieve the objectives**

- **Organisation:** Ensure all participatory groups are involved in decision-making even if this is not the most efficient approach.

- **Location:** Consider whether the objectives of the ID would best be served from a neutral location such as a public hall or a religious location such as a synagogue. A rotational basis may be an equitable solution for on-going dialogue. Above all, it is
critical to create an environment for the dialogue in which all participants feel safe and welcome, so that the environment contributes to the development of mutual trust and facilitates a beneficial exchange.

- **Food:** Kosher vegetarian is often best but the use of eggs or even garlic may be problematic. Always discuss with the other group.
- **Seating:** Consider whether genders should be mixed and whether priority seating should be offered to key participants.
- **Attendee Information:** Prepare a registration process that captures the necessary details of participants and consider where the registration will physically take place.
- **Regularity:** The ID event may be part of a longer-term program or a once-off event.

Guideline 4: Agree whether rules are necessary and what they should be

A number of factors will determine whether it is necessary to establish rules between the groups engaging in ID. These include the level of controversy in the topics likely to be covered, the nature and status or emotiveness of the attendees (e.g. clergy, lay people or community leaders), any history of disputation between the groups and the objectives of the session.

The necessity of rules will also depend on the likelihood of offence being given and taken and the level of knowledge each group has of the other. In many situations rules will be unnecessary but a statement of general principles centred around mutual respect may be useful to set the mood.

The following are some rules that may be helpful in promoting meaningful dialogue:

- **Basic courtesies such as**
  - mutual respect;
  - avoidance of dogmatic assertions;
  - rejection of any attempt to convert;
  - avoidance of emotive or melodramatic language which can inflame the discussion;
  - acceptance of comments from participants only through the chair with an acknowledgement that speakers should not be interrupted;
  - adoption of “Chatham House Rules”; and
  - consideration of whether questions should be submitted in writing and if they need to be submitted in advance.
Accept the likelihood of ideological differences and different interpretations or explanations of history (i.e. different narratives). There are some issues on which agreement cannot be reached and an understanding of the other’s view can still be valuable even if agreement isn’t possible. In such instances, the goal is to reach the point where groups agree to disagree.

Each group should define itself but avoid imposing their definition of the other group on that group (e.g. Jews should only say what it is like to be Jewish and not what they say it is to be Catholic or Buddhist.) Similarly, you should avoid stating the view of the other faith group as that is for them to do.

After agreeing on the broader objective of communication, determine which topics should not be discussed:

- e.g. when discussing Jewish-Catholic history, the role of persecution should be recognised rather than disavowed.
- e.g. when discussing the Middle East conflict, Israel’s right to exist should not be questioned although its behaviour on a particular occasion may be. Of course, the better position may be to avoid politics altogether as stated above.

Guideline 5: Create a measure to determine whether the event has been successful

Clear objectives for the ID make it possible to determine whether the event has been successful. While the outcomes may not be empirically measurable, it is usually possible to define indicators of success. Consider the following ways of judging success and decide which may be appropriate for your project.

Step 1: Determine which method you will use to measure the success of the project (e.g. survey participants, the number of attendees at a follow-up event or the support in organising that event, the number of participants who stay in touch, the development of an ongoing relationship between the groups etc.).

Step 2: Determine what “score” will indicate that the communication has been successful (e.g. 70% of participants rating the event as “Excellent”, 50% of participants saying they will attend next year).

Below is a list of objective measures that have been successfully used in the past.

- Gather regular feedback from participants (e.g. students, teachers, Imams, etc.) which contain scores for various elements. Scores enable tracking of whether the program is improving or not. The best approach is where participants are asked to answer questions on a scale of 1 (Disagree) to 10 (Agree) See the examples below.
  - The program increases my understanding of other religions [1 - 10].
  - I have learned things about other groups that have changed my opinions [1 - 10].
- Level of contact maintained between participants after the event (e.g. How many people are still in touch with people from the other group 3 – 6 – 9 months after the event?).
- Number of participants who agreed to attend or promote future programs.
- Regularity and frequency of events over a period of time; generally 12 months.
- Whether participants have encouraged a more tolerant position within their community media.
- Cessation of problematic behaviour that followed the request at the event.
  
  e.g. Targeting Jews for conversion, changes made to offensive literature, changes in the language used to refer to Israel etc.
- The number of people became involved in ID following the event.

Guideline 6: Prepare for Interfaith Dialogue

Ideally, Jewish participants will have more than a basic knowledge of Judaism and political and social concerns affecting Jews. Being unprepared or ‘Jewishly illiterate’ may slow the dialogue and cause it to fail to meet the ID objectives. Nevertheless, this is no reason not to have the dialogue as some basic preparation will assist participants to get to know one another, dispel myths and break down barriers. The following suggestions are made for those preparing for ID.

- Seek information from Jewish groups which have previously been in dialogue with the same group or organisation.
- Read the websites/other relevant material of the group you are talking to so you can understand their views on religious and other topics likely to arise.
  
  - Language can have different meanings to different groups so be mindful of any alternative meanings you encounter on the website of the other faith.
- Examine recent media material relating to the group you are communicating with to identify any pressing current issues.
- Prepare any written material to be printed and distributed, possibly in advance of the dialogue. This may include guidelines or rules for the dialogue itself.
- Research any cultural expectations of the group (e.g. when to stand or sit, whether to remove shoes etc.).
- Preparing talking points to raise during the dialogue and, if the interaction is open, which topics you wish to cover.
- Talk to people you know of the other faith to learn possible internal barriers.
- Refresh yourself on the Jewish view on religious or other topics (e.g. euthanasia) which are likely to arise and some basic reasons behind the Jewish view.
• Acknowledge that there is a range of Jewish views.
• Consider your own bias when discussing Jews and Israel.

Guideline 7: Identify behaviour which justifies the termination of Dialogue

Ideally rules governing participant behaviour will have been established prior to the meeting. When engaging with other groups, however, there is a risk that discussions will raise emotions and inappropriate behaviour or views may be expressed. Prior consideration of the behaviour that would lead you to end an event will assist in handling the situation should it arise. It may even be advisable to ensure that ALL participants are reminded at the outset of the dialogue to be mindful of statements or behaviour that may cause offence, hurt or embarrassment and to avoid such behaviour.

Whether the correct approach is to cease the dialogue will be best determined within the context of each particular ID. It is often a matter of how an issue is raised rather than whether it should have been raised.

A number of issues which may be considered inappropriate and give rise to the termination of the communication include:

• Accusations that the Jews killed Jesus and must, therefore, suffer for eternity;
  • Particularly if proclaimed publicly by a clergyman;
• Whether “Messianic Jews” should be involved in the discussions;
• Rude, dismissive, aggressive behaviour, including body language;
• Expectation that Jews should act contrary to our religious teachings or principles;
• A clash of different ‘historical facts’ that make continued discussion unproductive; and
• While Israel is not an ID topic, it may often arise and it is worthwhile considering which topics should be flagged as inappropriate, and possibly justify the termination of the dialogue at that point such as:
  • Referring to Israel’s behaviour by using terms from Nazism;
  • Failure to accept Israel’s right to exist; and
  • Insistence that suffering only occurs on one side of the Arab-Israeli divide.

Guideline 8: React appropriately when inappropriate behaviour occurs

Determining an appropriate response to unacceptable behaviour from a dialogue partner will require consideration of the circumstances and the Jewish people involved. Some will find it easier to remain engaged in an unpleasant/difficult situation while others will prefer to terminate the discussion.

11
In public, with the possibility of media coverage, the consequences of a dramatic response are magnified. The media thrive on conflict and give it more prominence than efforts for reconciliation. Certain groups, including some Jewish groups or individuals, may even seek to provoke or aggravate Jewish participants in a public arena.

In public (e.g. media, public conference/meeting):

- Remain calm, avoid emotive language and remain present unless the situation becomes aggressive or threatening.
- Explain why the statement/behaviour is unacceptable, and insist that it cease immediately. If the behaviour does not cease, it may be necessary to suspend the dialogue at that point with the hope of being able to resume it at a later date. Before any subsequent event, insist on developing rules which will forbid the unacceptable behaviour in future.
- If guidelines exist, draw attention to the breach and request a retraction/apology.
- Separate the offensive issue from the objective of the ID. Explain that it is unacceptable and needs to be addressed separately, but attempt to continue the dialogue on the main issue.

In private (e.g. one-on-few discussion, closed meeting):

- Remain calm, explain why the statement is offensive.
- Make more of an effort to push harder against inappropriate views if comfortable.
- The effect of ending the discussion is diminished if the meeting is private but the privacy also affords an opportunity to draw people back from unacceptable positions. Without an audience, people are often more willing to compromise.
- If progress is no longer possible, call a temporary halt to the dialogue but commit to further discussions at a later time.

After the interfaith event has ended; consider whether it is reasonable to seek re-engagement. The heat of a moment can lead to behaviour which would not occur under less emotional circumstances. Careful consideration should be had of the history of the ID and the likelihood of progress towards the objective before communication is permanently ended.

As appropriate, the re-constituted ID may involve a sub-group of the previous group or a request to exclude certain topics or even participants. Consideration should be given to making use of a professional facilitator to run the dialogue.

At least a letter/email should be sent explaining the breakdown in the dialogue if it is not to continue, and expressing regret even in the face of strong provocation.
F. Follow up Activity/On Going Dialogue

An ID event should not necessarily be seen as a “one off” event. Rather it should be seen as one and, possibly the first step in building better ongoing relationships between the participants on both a personal and a community level.

Accordingly, it is important to record the outcome of the event and the range of discussions that were held. It is also important to identify the participants, record the issues raised and any difficulties associated. It may be that a difficulty was encountered that, with better preparation, could be avoided on future occasions. It is also beneficial for the records to note how many sessions were held, the locations of the sessions and whether the objectives were achieved in part or in full.

Consideration should be given to any follow up events and whether the base of participation from the Jewish community should be widened. It may be considered appropriate to involve representatives from the JCCV in the dialogue if issues that either concern the entire community or cut across several sections of our community are being considered.

It is also necessary to consider how and where these records are stored, and who has access to them. Again, the JCCV can assist in this regard and develop an archive of records that will serve all of our community for many years to come. For example, this information will help our community plan further interfaith activities, identify groups with which we should increase our level of contact and develop a database comprising communal leaders and interested, willing participants from other communities.

It is recommended that all organisations submit a completed Awareness Form questionnaire in Appendix 4 in respect of the dialogue to the JCCV. Information Sheets are available from the JCCV office. In this way the JCCV can develop the community database relating to ID and the benefits of ongoing dialogue can be maximised for all concerned.

G. Conclusion
The organised Jewish community is committed to ID. If we are to live harmoniously with others we must strive to understand their communities and help other communities understand us. This will benefit the Jewish and non-Jewish communities alike. Quite simply, it is good for all Victorians. In a new nation like Australia where views are less entrenched we have opportunities that do not exist elsewhere in the world.

That being said, ID should not be undertaken naively. There must be an awareness of the potential risks involved as well as the benefits. When Jews engage in ID, they are seen as representatives of their entire community and the discussions that take place can have wide-ranging and long-term impacts on the communities with which we are engaging. This
is another reason why we recommend there should be prior consultation with or involvement by the JCCV.

By setting clear objectives for the ID and understanding our community’s position through interaction with the JCCV and by remaining aware of the objectives throughout the process, the likelihood of successful and enduring dialogues will increase. This involves a careful balance of compromise and openness to others as well as honesty with your own beliefs and principles. We hope that these guidelines help you in this regard.
APPENDIX 1: Jewish Support for Interfaith Dialogue

Support Available from the JCCV

Support is available from the JCCV, the Zionist Council of Victoria, the Rabbinical Council of Victoria, the B’nai B’rith Anti-Defamation Commission and other organisations in relation to:

- Suggestions for engaging youth participants (i.e. 18-25 years);
- Contacts within other communities;
- Maintenance of a central record of the interfaith activities taking place;
- Publicity and encouragement of interfaith events to generate greater participation (particularly from Orthodox Jews);
- Assistance with answering religious questions; and
- Advice on which non-Jewish groups/individuals should and should not be approached for dialogue based on past experience.

A one-page fact sheet on Judaism

The following are a list of suggested topics should you wish to prepare a short summary of Judaism and Jewishness to be distributed amongst non-Jewish interfaith participants.

- History of Jews and Jewish achievements in Australia
- A rebuttal of popular myths about Judaism
- The diverse nature of Jewish practice and geographic and ethno-cultural differences
- Basic tenets of Judaism including:
  - Jewish belief and practice (Kashrut, Jewish Calendar, Festivals which impact on meeting times)
  - Antisemitism

Although much of the above material is available on the Internet you should be cautious about the source of such material and its potential bias.

The JCCV has prepared a fact sheet and booklet which is available for your use

We encourage you to use this material rather than attempting to prepare your own material.
APPENDIX 2: Successful Interfaith Activities

It is not always possible to know the impact of ID and it may be years before ID has a positive impact on behaviour and the community.

Below is a list of successful examples of ID.

- Jewish, Christian and Muslim (JCMA) conferences are the first time many Muslims and Jews meet and provide the opportunity for a positive interaction.
- JCCV conducting ongoing meetings with a wide range of faith groups.
- National Council of Jewish Women of Australia (VIC) has been running an interfaith Women's Model Seder for several years and interfaith Chanukah celebrations.
- The Holocaust Museum and Australian Jewish Museum have been engaged in long-term, diverse and successful ID.
- Social welfare activities eg feeding homeless people, engaging with Sudanese refugees to reduce racism, addressing poverty.
- Providing advice on how to run community administration.
- Reverse dinners – Muslims attend Sukkot and Jews attend Ifta feast.
- A number of successful publications and annual Gesher launch that attracts hundreds of people.
- Young Muslim attendees at the 2005 JCMA conference organised an rally at Fed square to condemn the London bombings within 3 days of the attack.
- Production of the “Melbourne Statement” by Jews, Christians and Muslims which rejects the Hamas charter, acknowledges the right of Israel to exist within secure and safe borders, and calls on Hamas to stop sending rockets into Israel.
- Courage to Care receives many moving letters from students who have seen the exhibition. Courage to Care is a travelling exhibition developed by B’nai B’rith to convey a message of communal tolerance and harmony. It uses the example of Righteous Gentiles during the Holocaust to encourage children to have the “Courage to Care” when they see others being victimised.
- Strong support from participants at the Interfaith Conference for Women (Jewish, Christian and Muslim).
- In conjunction with an ‘Intersections’ exhibition, an exhibition” Young Intersections” was held. This was the product of 10 girls from each of four schools: Isik college; Beth Rivkah; Presentation Convent and Thornbury HS, working together with an
artist/facilitator over 3 sessions to prepare this exhibition which was about their own faiths and beliefs.

- An Interfaith Advisory Group is managing events around the forthcoming exhibition “Women in the Bible”.

- The Jewish Christian Muslim Association runs conferences and a range of other activities designed to bring the faiths together with understanding.

- Attending and promoting multi-faith events such as those run by dedicated multi-faith organisations (e.g. JCMA, CCJ, Parliament of the World’s Religions) and government bodies (e.g. Harmony Day Festival) and other religious and ethnic groups.

- Presentation of a session on basic Judaism (Judaism 101) to Christian students at the College of Theology & Ministry at Melbourne University.

- Prepared an occasional newsletter as ongoing communication between conference attendees who are invited to contribute interfaith articles.

- Much private, informal ID take place in personal and occupational capacities.
APPENDIX 3: Suggested topics and events for an Interfaith Dialogue

Topics should relate to the objectives of the ID but below is a broad list of topics that may be useful for those who are preparing an agenda.

- Judaism 101
- Descriptions of the Victorian Jewish community and the issues it faces
- Combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism
- Challenges we have with our own faith and community
- The distinctive nature of Jewishness (i.e. religion and culture)
- Ecological positions and activities within the Jewish community
- Parallels of Islamic/Christian and Jewish law and values
- Working for continuity of faith in a secular world
- Role of women in each faith community
- Tours of museums, synagogues, Holocaust museum etc
- Youth or school groups from different backgrounds can be brought together to discuss issues in common that they face such as environmental concerns, issues relating to prospective employment and careers, pressures arising out of alcohol/drug exposure and the like. They can also be encouraged to form ongoing taskforces to deal with these issues.
APPENDIX 4: Post-Interfaith Dialogue Community Awareness Form

Please answer the following questions and send it to 306 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield South VIC 3161 or email it to info@iccv.org.au.

Post-Interfaith Dialogue Community Awareness Form

1. What is your name?

.................................................................

2. Which Community organisation are you from

.................................................................

3. Which other Jewish community organisations were involved, stating the names and titles of the representatives from each organisation?

.................................................................

.................................................................

4. Which non Jewish community organisations were involved, stating the names and titles of the representatives from each organisation?

.................................................................

.................................................................

5. What issues were raised?

.................................................................

.................................................................

6. What were the particular challenges or successes?

.................................................................

.................................................................
7. What was the principal objective for this interfaith event?

........................................................................................................
........................................................................................................

8. Do you think that objective was met? (provide detail)

........................................................................................................
........................................................................................................

9. Has a further interfaith event been planned? If so, give details.

........................................................................................................
........................................................................................................

10. What has been agreed to happen next by the participants at this event?

........................................................................................................
........................................................................................................

11. What was the best aspect of the event?

........................................................................................................
........................................................................................................

12. Do you think the event could be improved for next time? If so, provide details.

........................................................................................................
........................................................................................................

Thank you for completing this form and assisting the Jewish Community to co-ordinate its interfaith activities.