

Meet Fantastically Real Young European Jews

Session plan (1 hr)

Notes before starting

This session aims to familiarise the participants with the Kaleidoscope project and the stories. Ideally the participants will be inspired by the initiative and will be motivated to write their own story and be part of a collective record of the lives of Jews in Europe today.

Materials needed

Download and print from resources page - (<https://www.kaleidoscope-lives.eu/en/resources>)

- Enough copies of 7 stories (depending on the size of the group)
- Enough copies of 7 questions pages

00:00 – 05:00 Welcoming

Explain that you will briefly talk about an exciting initiative capturing stories of Jews in Europe in the 1930s and today.

If the audience doesn't know you, introduce yourself and explain in your own words what is your connection to the project and why it is important for you and why you think it is important/relevant for the audience.

05:00 – 10:00 Introduction

In your own words, tell them a version of this (from the website: <https://www.kaleidoscope-lives.eu/en/about-us>):

"Between 1934 and 1939, the YIVO institute in Vilnius organised a competition for young people to send their anonymous autobiographies. They wanted to learn about the lives of young Jews in the Yiddish speaking lands. They wrote to Jewish communities in Europe asking for their help to promote the project.

They received 627 entries, and they were going to announce the winners of the last round on 1st September 1939 and that is when the second world war broke out. We don't know what happened to the writers, but we can imagine they perished in the Holocaust.

Inspired by this project, the Rothschild Foundation Hanadiv Europe decided to replicate the project in the 21st Century and this is what we are going to talk about today.

Since September 2023, Kaleidoscope has collected and published over 70 stories in multiple languages. You can read them on the website (www.kaleidoscope-lives.eu) or listen to recorded interviews on Spotify (<https://open.spotify.com/show/4EHgjf8jqb7NcCtRMFWVm>).

Today we are going to meet some of the writers.

10:00 – 45:00 Reading the stories

There are 7 stories for this session (2 YIVO stories and 5 Kaleidoscope stories).

Step one:

Divide the participants into small groups and give each group copies of one the seven stories to read among themselves.

Step two:

Ask a representative of each group to stand up and introduce the writer of their story and give a brief summary to the rest of the group.

Step three:

Ask the participants *why do they think that the original stories were anonymous and today's authors write under their names? What was it like to read these stories for you? Did you relate? Were you surprised? If you were to write a story what might you include? What might have motivated these people to share their stories?*

Step four:

Give each group the page of questions for the relevant story (each story has different questions) and ask them to discuss the questions among themselves.

45:00 – 55:00 Conclusion and action points

- Are there any questions?
- Encourage the participants to visit the website and read more stories (<https://www.kaleidoscope-lives.eu/en/stories>)
- Encourage the participants to write their own story.
- Ask them to scan the QR code or register directly on the website (<https://www.kaleidoscope-lives.eu/en/participate>)
- Ask them to share the project with friends, encourage others to register and follow Kaleidoscope on social media. (@kaleidoscopeliveseu)



Note: If you want to run a session for participants to begin writing their own story stories, you can download the session plan "**Write your Kaleidoscope story**".