



MATAN

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Media Contacts: Brett Kleiman, brett.kleiman@berlinrosen.com

As New Data Exposes Major Accessibility Gaps Across Jewish Life, Matan Launches First–Ever National Pathway for Disability Inclusion

New Matan Alliance for Disability Inclusion establishes a national standard for accountability and action, responding to landmark report that found Jewish institutions lag far behind secular organizations on disability access

Washington, DC – As mounting evidence reveals a widespread and deeply concerning gap in disability inclusion across Jewish communal life, Matan, the national leader in Jewish disability inclusion, today announced the [launch](#) of the Matan Alliance for Disability Inclusion, a first-of-its-kind national membership certification program designed to move Jewish institutions from good intentions to measurable, accountable action. The announcement, first reported in [The Algemeiner](#), followed conversations with Jewish communities across the country about the need for stronger frameworks for disability inclusion, a need further underscored during Matan’s listening tour for Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month (JDAIM).

The launch follows the release of a [major Matan report](#) examining the state of accessibility across synagogues, schools, and Jewish organizations nationwide. The report identifies ongoing challenges that continue to limit full participation, leadership, and a sense of belonging for many Jews with disabilities. Despite growing awareness and public commitments to inclusion, the findings underscore that many Jewish institutions lack the policies, training, and accountability structures required to ensure meaningful and consistent access.

The timing underscores the urgency of those findings, coming on the heels of Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month in February, advancing meaningful inclusion for people with disabilities in all facets of Jewish life.

The Matan Alliance for Disability Inclusion responds directly to these findings by providing synagogues, JCCs, Federations, and Jewish organizations with a structured, accountable pathway to move from aspiration to action—and to be publicly recognized for meaningful progress. The program establishes, for the first time, a shared national benchmark for what disability inclusion in Jewish life actually looks like in practice.

*“Our report made clear what many Jewish people with disabilities already know: good intentions without structure are not enough,” said **Meredith Polsky, Matan’s founder and executive director.** “At a moment when one in four people live with a disability, and when national safeguards for disability rights are under threat, the Jewish community cannot afford to treat inclusion as optional or informal. Institutions that are serious about fostering belonging, equity, and access must take the time to invest in it and treat it with the same rigor as any other communal priority. The Matan Alliance for Disability Inclusion helps organizations do that, giving them the tools, training, and accountability they need to embed inclusion into Jewish culture – not as a siloed issue, but as a core professional and moral responsibility.”*

A Community-Wide Benchmark for Inclusion

The Matan Alliance for Disability Inclusion is a tiered affiliation model that allows organizations to progress through three levels of engagement – Ally, Partner, and Leader – as they deepen their inclusive practices. Unlike one-off trainings or symbolic commitments, the Alliance provides the ongoing engagement, data collection and renewal needed for demonstrated progress. The program combines virtual learning, live facilitation, coaching, and ongoing expert support to help organizations operationalize inclusion in sustainable, measurable ways.

At each level, participating organizations gain access to high-quality training, practical tools, and external validation, while contributing to a growing national picture of inclusion across Jewish life.

Accountability and Impact Through Three Levels of Engagement

Level 1: Matan Ally

Designed for organizations taking their first formal step toward accountability, this level includes organization-wide access to Matan’s virtual onboarding training *All In. All Together.*, a baseline accessibility survey and audit, specialized resources for accessible programming, and recognition through a Matan Ally badge and website listing.

Level 2: Matan Partner

Building on Level 1, Matan Partners receive deeper implementation support through role-specific training modules, live coaching with Matan experts, peer learning communities, and discounted access to Matan’s paid offerings and professional development—supporting deeper implementation and culture change beyond individual champions.

Level 3: Matan Leader

The highest level of affiliation offers comprehensive, on-call expert support from Matan, full access to Matan’s paid resources, PR and visibility opportunities, and significant discounts on fellowships, institutes, and customized professional development. Matan Leaders serve as field-wide models of inclusive excellence and accountability.

Participation in the Matan Alliance for Disability Inclusion includes **annual renewal tied to continued engagement and progress**. Data collected through the program will inform Matan's annual *State of Inclusion* report, creating national benchmarks and tracking trends over time.

The Matan Alliance for Disability Inclusion is now open to Jewish organizations nationwide.

“Real progress requires real action. Jewish professionals and Jewish institutions prioritize belonging, both from a communal and a moral responsibility,” stated Polsky. *“But that requires moving beyond goodwill to concrete structures that ensure people are not left out. These aren't massive overhauls. In many cases, a few clear, practical steps can make an immediate and meaningful difference.”*

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About Matan

For more than two decades, Matan has worked alongside Jewish schools, synagogues, and organizations to build sustainable systems of inclusion. Through professional training, consultation, and community-wide assessments, Matan equips leaders to translate values into action — creating Jewish spaces where people of all abilities can learn, pray, and belong.