Sefaria
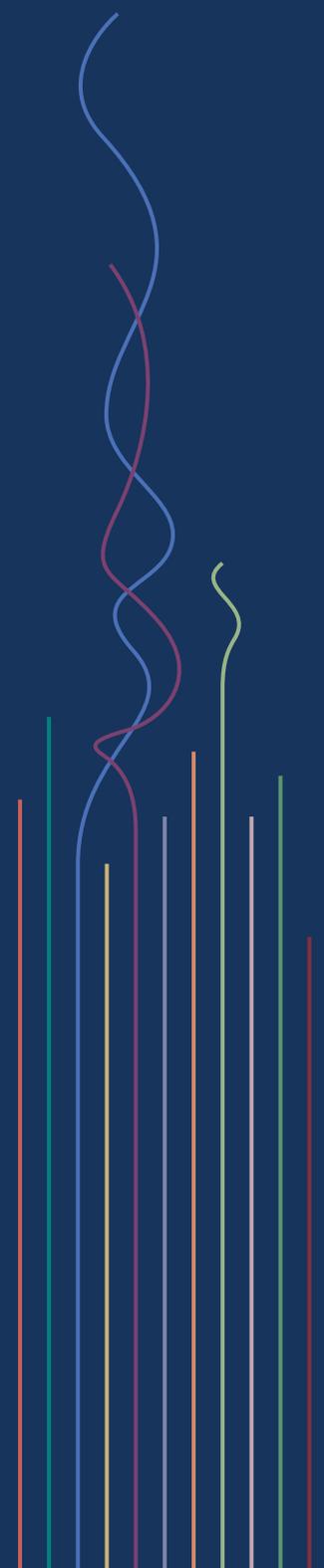
Strategic Plan

2023-2027

TAKING THE *People of the Book*
INTO THE *Digital Age*

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Board of Directors and CEO

We are proud to present Sefaria's new strategic plan, which forges an exciting path for ambitious growth and radical impact over the next five years. When Joshua Foer and Brett Lockspeiser created Sefaria in 2013, they imagined a project that would bring the People of the Book into the digital age. Their founding initiative, to build a free and accessible digital library of Jewish texts, was once regarded as an unlikely dream and is today a reality the Jewish people cannot imagine a world without.

With more than 550,000 users visiting our library each month (not to mention the hundreds of thousands more encountering Sefaria's texts in classrooms and through third-party products that use our data), as well as nearly half a million app downloads to date, Sefaria is now regarded as not merely a Jewish learning resource, but an essential utility. As Josh recently noted, there are more people studying on Sefaria on any given day than can fit into any single beit midrash on the planet. And for many, the time spent on our site is not passive, but deep and interactive: over 400,000 source sheets have been created to date by users interested in adding their own unique insights and ideas to the tradition.

The Jewish world has taken note, placing the magnitude of our impact in historical terms. In 2019, Sefaria was the lead in JTA's list of the 10 ways American Jewish life changed in the 2010s, with the note, "Much like Google and Facebook before it, Sefaria made many people wonder how they had ever lived without it." Two years later, scholar Daniel Gordis placed Sefaria second on this list of the five most important things that have happened to the Jewish people in the past half century, writing of the "Sefaria phenomenon" that "democratized [Jewish learning] in a way that it has never been before."

All of this success created a challenge for our strategic planning committee: Could we push ourselves to replicate – and indeed, surpass – the level of impact Sefaria accomplished in its first extraordinary chapter? For nine months, our board and senior leadership engaged in a rigorous strategic planning process to answer that question, weighing the viewpoints of diverse stakeholders from across the full spectrum of the Jewish community and around the world.

The result is a plan which envisions a bold future for the organization – one that we believe positions Sefaria to accomplish even more in its second decade than it did in its first. We will bring in millions more users through new features, on-ramping, and a focus on accessing markets with tremendous untapped potential, like Israel and those newer to Jewish learning. We will grow and further cement our historical collection of Jewish texts to ensure a long and vibrant Torah future. And we will spur and catalyze innovation based on the technology and API we developed in our first nine years.

When Josh and Brett sat down to create Sefaria, they had their sights set well beyond a mere website of Jewish texts, to a rich and vibrant digital future for the Jewish people. This plan is our stepping stone to that future, and we're just getting started. We hope you find the following pages as exciting as we do, and we invite you to join us in this transformative journey.

Samuel Moed
Chair of the Board's Strategic Planning Committee

Daniel Septimus
Chief Executive Officer

Overview

Before the internet came the printing press. Before the printing press, there were handwritten scrolls. Before that, we relied on oral traditions passed down from teacher to student. Each new medium democratized knowledge further, bringing more and more people into the great conversations of Jewish learning.

Sefaria was founded nine years ago as the next stage in this great chain — shepherding Jewish texts into the digital age and utilizing technological advancements to radically expand access to them.

In the time since, Sefaria has developed two transformative advancements: a repository of open data serving as the infrastructure of Jewish texts in the digital age and an accessible interface for engaging with that data — the Sefaria website and apps.

Through this planning process, we have identified opportunities to build further upon our transformational work in both of these core arenas while also broadening our vision to embrace new digital Torah experiences that can open up exciting possibilities for growth and impact beyond the data platform and library products we host today.

As the pioneers of Torah and technology in the 21st century, we see tremendous opportunities before us to continue to radically expand the audience for Torah for people of all backgrounds and skill levels, to advance technologies that make Torah study richer and more meaningful, and to further evolve the Jewish library in the digital age.

In 2022, we stand ready, committed, and fully energized to stretch our horizons... pursuing our vision to make Torah resonant and alive.

Vision

A world where Torah is alive and resonant with a vast and diverse Jewish community that is actively adding to and engaging in the continued conversation of the Jewish people and our texts.

Mission

Create the future of Torah by maximizing its impact in the digital age.

Organizational Values

COMMUNAL INHERITANCE

Torah belongs to the Jewish people, not to any one denomination or institution. These texts should be free and accessible to all. We strive to make sure everyone is included, no matter their age, gender, economic situation, geographic location, or religious identity. We may differ in our opinions but we come together around our texts, which connect us to our past and to each other.

MULTIVOCALITY

Inspired by the talmudic tradition of argument for the sake of heaven, Sefaria believes in the 70 faces of the Torah and the value of including a variety of voices and perspectives in our core library.

OPEN SOURCE

The future of Torah is a collective responsibility. We want to encourage others both to build upon what has come before and to continue to build what comes next. While we create foundational infrastructure for the digital future of Jewish texts, our work is not only for us and our products; we actively encourage and empower others to join us in creating that future.

CONVERSATION

Judaism's vibrancy lives at the intersection of text and conversation. Torah is not only a synonym for the five books of Moses; it includes 3,000-plus years of conversation with varied voices and opinions. Sefaria brings that conversation to life, spanning 3,000 years and continuing on with our users today. Sefaria is bringing the conversations of the past and present into the future, not only by digitizing the texts but by allowing current learners from diverse backgrounds to add their ideas.

PIONEERING

Innovative technology is core to Sefaria's mission of bringing Torah into the future. We don't know what the future holds, but we will continue to ask questions, experiment, and push forward, driven by data and the most important new technologies.

OUR FOUNDATION

Sefaria's First Nine Years

Best-selling author Joshua Foer and former Google product manager Brett Lockspeiser founded Sefaria in 2013 to shepherd the People of the Book into the digital age, radically expanding the reach, accessibility, and impact of Jewish texts. In the short time since, Sefaria has transformed from an ambitious moonshot to a global institution.

Today, Sefaria houses a world-class, interconnected digital library that spans the genres and centuries of the Jewish canon. With more than 300 million words in Hebrew and translation — the equivalent of approximately 5,000 books — it is the world's largest free collection of Jewish texts and translations online. The reception from the Jewish world has been tremendous, with more than 550,000 unique visitors a month, nearly half a million app downloads, and over 200 third-party digital projects relying on our data to power their work.

In 2018, Sefaria embarked on its first strategic plan to attract more learners and transform the way people learn, teach, and create Torah. From 2019-2021, we reimagined the experience of studying Torah online with a major web and app redesign that vastly increased the approachability of Jewish texts. We added critical works — including a historic English translation of the Jerusalem Talmud — that further transformed the accessibility of the Jewish canon. Perhaps most importantly, we pivoted to embrace our new role as an essential resource for students, educators, rabbis, and lay people around the world when the institutions they counted on for access to Jewish texts shut down during the pandemic.

Above all, this last chapter cemented Sefaria as an integral part of the Jewish present and future, a core communal resource relied upon by many and game-changing for all.

The Next Five, 10, 50 Years

Sefaria will pursue its vision with an even broader agenda in this next phase of growth, innovation, and transformational impact. In Josh and Brett's original vision to bring Jewish texts into the digital age, creating a free online library of classical Jewish texts was the first and most urgent intervention needed to catch up with the digital world, but not the last. Now that we have a first-rate collection of texts in place — in addition to a radically accessible platform through which users around the world can interface with them — we are well-positioned to widen the aperture of our focus, amplifying the impact of these initial undertakings in service of our founders' ambitious vision.

In this next phase, Sefaria will pursue its vision with an even more ambitious agenda of growth, innovation, and transformational impact. We envision three central pillars of growth under a shared Sefaria, Inc. umbrella. Each will maintain its own bold, distinct path forward but remain in necessary conversation with the others. **Sefaria.org,** our digital library interface accessed by more than 4. 7 million people annually worldwide, will focus on the still-unmet potential of Sefaria's website and apps to provide unprecedented access to the Jewish canon to today's learners and all of those to come. The **Sefaria Digital Collection,** our communally owned, universally reusable collection of Jewish texts, will grow and improve to ensure that this foundational platform will stand the test of time and carry this ancient tradition into the future. **Sefaria Ventures** will look to catalyze the future of digital Torah, pushing ourselves and others to develop new digital interfaces and experiences for Jewish texts.

This plan, with its three key areas of work, operates with an eye toward immediate impact while also presenting a long-term vision for Sefaria's future. Sefaria.org will continue to serve people around the world today and tomorrow, the Sefaria Digital Collection will secure the place of Jewish texts a century from now and beyond, and Sefaria Ventures will serve as the bridge to that future — catalyzing the ecosystem for technology and Torah, and exploring new possibilities to bring about a world in which Torah study is rich, resonant, and alive to more people than ever before.

Our New Strategic Plan: 2023-2027

Sefaria, Inc.

SEFARIA.ORG	SEFARIA VENTURES

SEFARIA DIGITAL COLLECTION

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: SEFARIA.ORG

Develop a Universally Accessible Digital Library Experience

— Create a more accessible and inviting experience for users

— Grow and diversify the audience for Torah

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: SEFARIA VENTURES

Power New Pathways to Digital Torah Beyond the Library

— Expand our focus to new, transformative digital Torah experiences

— Cultivate the broader, digital Torah ecosystem to enable the flowering of Jewish learning in new media

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: SEFARIA DIGITAL COLLECTION

Create a Digital Torah Collection to Bring the People of the Book Into the Future

— Assemble a world-class, open-source digital collection of Jewish texts

— Develop new layers of data to steward the Jewish textual tradition into a rich and vibrant future
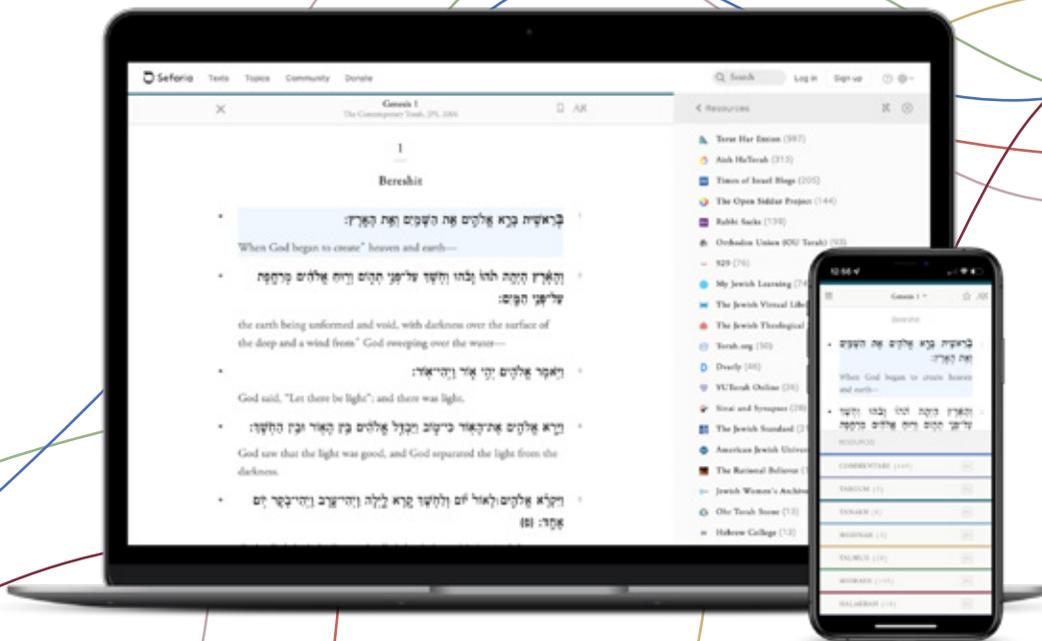
STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Strengthen and Sustain Sefaria, Inc.

— Grow and diversify our revenue streams

— Achieve operational excellence

Sefaria.org

1

Develop a Universally Accessible Digital Library Experience

Sefaria.org, along with our Android and iOS apps, aims to give all Jews, everywhere, access to their textual heritage. Making the Jewish library freely available was a critical first step, but the work to make these books not just available but truly accessible to an ever-growing, diverse community is ongoing. We believe we can dramatically increase both the scale of access and the depth of engagement with Jewish texts through an innovative suite of new initiatives within our website and apps, creating a virtuous cycle of enriched user experience and growth.

Our Approach to Achieving This Goal

I **CREATE A MORE ACCESSIBLE AND INVITING EXPERIENCE FOR USERS.**

Sefaria's work has already radically democratized access to Jewish texts, but tremendous opportunity remains. We will push further on our original transformational achievement, continuing to open up the Jewish library as never before. A new content acquisition strategy will better serve learners, and product innovations will enhance the library experience for all users — particularly those with less comfort navigating the Jewish library.

—— *Key Tactics to Get Us There:*

i. **Add modern content to the library that makes the canon more accessible — even without open licenses.**

A new emphasis on modern classics — e.g., the writings of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, Rav Adin Steinsaltz, and the feminist classics — will

bring the core canon to life for contemporary audiences. Modern Hebrew commentaries, which begin to offer the value proposition of access to Hebrew speakers that we offer to English speakers through translations, will become a new strategic focus as well. For both categories, we will — for the first time — consider works with traditional licenses if we cannot negotiate an open license (see details in box below).

ii. Enhance discoverability to facilitate self-guided exploration.

We will build a comprehensive **Digital Torah Encyclopedia** for the 21st century: a tool that will allow users of diverse backgrounds to discover and find Jewish texts topically, driven by their interests and curiosities (see box on next page). We will significantly enhance our **Search** functionality — the universal funnel into our texts for scholars and newcomers alike — by refining our algorithms to allow for more powerful searches (e.g., more precise queries and responses) as well as more intelligent searches (e.g. enabling different spellings of a word or the ability to search a time period or geographic location). We will also expand our efforts to further annotate the Sefaria website with **descriptive copy,** ensuring that even users with no previous experience with the Jewish canon can ground themselves with context.

iii. Increase user support for all users.

Not all of our users are optimizing their use of Sefaria. Alongside efforts to enhance product navigation, we will **invest in user support** to ensure that all visitors to the site

STRATEGIC LICENSING PIVOT

Our interest in giving contemporary Jews the best and most accessible Jewish library necessitates a substantive strategic pivot: in adding to Sefaria the most sought-after, relevant, and important modern works in Torah today, we must make some concessions to our heretofore strict commitment to open licenses. While our classical library and the vast majority of our collection will remain free for re-use by third-parties — a critical necessity for Sefaria's historic data stewardship project — Sefaria's users have long communicated a desire for a more expansive library that includes the modern classics necessary for a robust and representative Torah conversation today. We will shift our approach to licensing, where necessary, to meet this need.

— from seasoned students to first-time Googlers — can find what they're looking for and make the most of our vast resources. We will explore an **"Ask the Librarian"** feature that provides real-time guidance to users and might prove a game-changing support, offer **targeted trainings,** and further enhance the experience of navigating through the site with the addition of new guideposts and on-ramps, like **"Start Here" pages.**

iv. Invest deeply in data analytics to better understand our users and how to best serve them.

While Sefaria has historically collected information about how many people use our site and what they are doing on it, we have an opportunity to better harness the technologies, techniques, and analytics know-how to fully capitalize on those data insights. We will **transition to a new Google analytics system** (Google Analytics 4). This will better position us to identify opportunities, emerging learning trends, and new ways to create the best possible experience for our different audiences.

THE DIGITAL TORAH ENCYCLOPEDIA: A NEW ONTOLOGY

In computer science, an ontology is a computer-understandable model of a subject area. Sefaria has begun to develop the most comprehensive and integrated ontology of Torah ever created, describing the authors of works, the people and places mentioned in the texts, the concepts discussed, and the relationships between all of these subjects and the texts themselves. Over the next five years, we will expand the coverage of the ontology and unleash its potential for exploring Torah literature.

We envision thousands of rich and inviting pages that will topically organize the information in the Jewish library's stacks, building a state-of-the-art knowledge base around Torah. This massive project to encode

and encapsulate the knowledge in our textual tradition — from Parsha, holidays, and characters to animals, emotions, and places — will make for a vibrant, new, and interesting presentation of Jewish texts in digital media, allowing people to turn to Jewish texts for insight in previously unimaginable ways.

The value these pages can bring is enormous: They will make the experience of navigating through the Jewish canon far more impactful for users of every skill level and, at the same time, be a huge driver of search traffic as they introduce thousands of new front doors into the library. The evolution of these **Topic Pages** will allow us to compete for an entirely new class of search traffic, as Sefaria will begin to surface when users search for Jewish ideas and topics rather than just texts.

Historically, the transition from manuscripts to printed books created a new category of "finding aids" to help readers navigate the new media: tables of contents, indices, etc. A similar change occurred with the transition from print to digital media, as the internet gave way to innovations such as in-page search functions and multisite search engines. The Jewish digital library is an incredible and historic invention — thousands of books, all in one — and Sefaria's **Digital Torah Encyclopedia,** powered by our Torah ontology, will be a new kind of "finding aid" for the 21st century.

Illustrating This Strategy

By 2027, we will:

1 —— Explore the landscape for modern content licensing and pursue negotiations for the top 50 modern classics to be added to Sefaria.org.

2 —— Launch a Digital Torah Encyclopedia that will offer definitions, context, and entry points into Sefaria's Library for 5,000 key topics.

3 —— Introduce and evaluate an "Ask the Librarian" feature that combines customer service software (CSS) with real-time help by a member of our team.

4 —— Expand our efforts to annotate the site with descriptive copy by covering every title and author in Hebrew and English.

5 —— Generate a welcoming landing page for French, Spanish, German and Russian readers.

6 —— Maintain a user satisfaction rate of at least 80%.

II **GROW AND DIVERSIFY THE AUDIENCE FOR TORAH.**

Though Sefaria's user growth to date has been strong, with more than 550,000 visitors a month, we have the opportunity to grow that number dramatically while increasing engagement and depth of learning. We will begin with special attention paid to markets with the most growth potential, such as Israel, and with mission-critical audiences, such as newcomers to Torah. Ultimately, millions of additional users will be engaged through new digital marketing strategies and organizational partnerships. With an increasingly diverse and representative user audience, we will be working toward Sefaria's ultimate vision: a diverse and dynamic Jewish community where Torah is a shared language and we all benefit from its collective wisdom.

—— *Key Tactics to Get Us There:*

i. Optimize app download experience and integrate a new email strategy to capture and retain new users.

We are refining our marketing efforts around two major targets: acquisition and retention. To create a world where every Jew carries the complete Jewish library in their back pocket, we will invest in **app download optimization** — landing us in the devices of progressively more people — and in **newsletter growth** enabled by switching to a new customer relationship management (CRM) system. These pursuits will expand our

reach while offering meaningful content and substance to our existing users, keeping their Torah exploration fresh and bringing them back to the text for ongoing engagement.

ii. Explore partnerships with other Jewish organizations to reach new audiences, in particular newcomers to Torah.

Working in partnership with other Jewish organizations, leaders, and communities, we will find innovative ways to reach new audiences. We will pay particular attention to organizations with a **specific focus on newcomers to Torah** who can help bridge the gap between our vast and potentially overwhelming collection, and people with an interest in Jewish text but little or no background in it.

iii. Work deeply with educators as the Torah "influencers" who collectively reach all Jewish learners.

Sefaria has emerged as an indispensible resource for educators that makes Jewish education broader, deeper, and more impactful. Educators have emerged as an indispensable audience for Sefaria as our most steadfast users and our loudest champions. In this next stage of growth, we will leverage **educators in their role as influencers,** or critical nodes in the broader Jewish educational ecosystem who can bring Sefaria to more people and deepen their engagement with it as a tool for personal exploration. We will work toward **systemic penetration** by integrating into the Jewish educational ecosystem on a number of levels: rabbinical school training programs, teachers colleges, and a cross section of diverse organizations and institutions already on the ground.

iv. Invest in internationalization.

Sefaria has always been a resource for the global Jewish community, and we see major opportunities to make deeper inroads in new markets abroad. We will **generate landing pages in various languages** to capture search queries and help onboard global users, and we will work toward a **universal translation feature** — a machine-based solution for translating English translations into other languages. At the same time, we will invest more deeply in **digital marketing efforts** — including search engine optimization, A/B testing of landing pages, paid ads, and more — to optimize for international reach.

SEFARIA'S OPPORTUNITY IN ISRAEL

More than half of world Jewry resides in Israel, where we have only begun cultivating an audience and where there is a unique opportunity to bring millions more Jews into the great Torah conversation. We aim to address the Israeli market with a two-pronged approach: growing the Israeli audience for our library website and apps, and leveraging Sefaria's unique value-add through our work with Sefaria Ventures (see below). We will push our collection to be more resonant for Israelis with a new focus on modern works that make the classical canon more accessible to Hebrew speakers, and we will invest in marketing efforts to expand brand awareness. At the same time, with both the Torah and technology talent to create new interfaces, and myriad boutique audiences that might be served through new and innovative projects, we believe Sefaria's unique value proposition will shine through the work of Sefaria Ventures, and we will position ourselves accordingly.

Illustrating This Strategy

By 2027, we will:

1 —— Reach 1 million users/month (representing an average of 13% year-over-year growth rate).

2 —— See a significant increase in our 'newcomer' audience (which currently represents 19% of our monthly audience, or 95,000 users).

3 —— Increase app downloads 10% year over year.

4 —— Create a dynamic email program with at least 140,000 active subscribers (a 250% increase) that adds access points, additional value for all learners, and opportunities for meaningful partnership.

5 —— Establish three major, ongoing partnerships to reach new audiences and further enrich our community's access to creative Torah learning.

6 —— Boast user demographics that trend closer to the demographics reported about the entirety of the Jewish community (as measured by Pew Research Center).

7 —— Power the Jewish educational ecosystem in North America by: working with approximately 10 institutions and 100-plus Jewish professionals yearly to empower educators to integrate Sefaria into their work; and incorporating Sefaria into the training that Jewish educational professionals receive at rabbinical schools and other higher learning institutions to ensure that at least 75% of Jewish clergy from major Jewish movements (including Reconstructionist, Reform, Conservative, Modern and Centrist Orthodox) go into their fields comfortable using Sefaria.

Sefaria Ventures
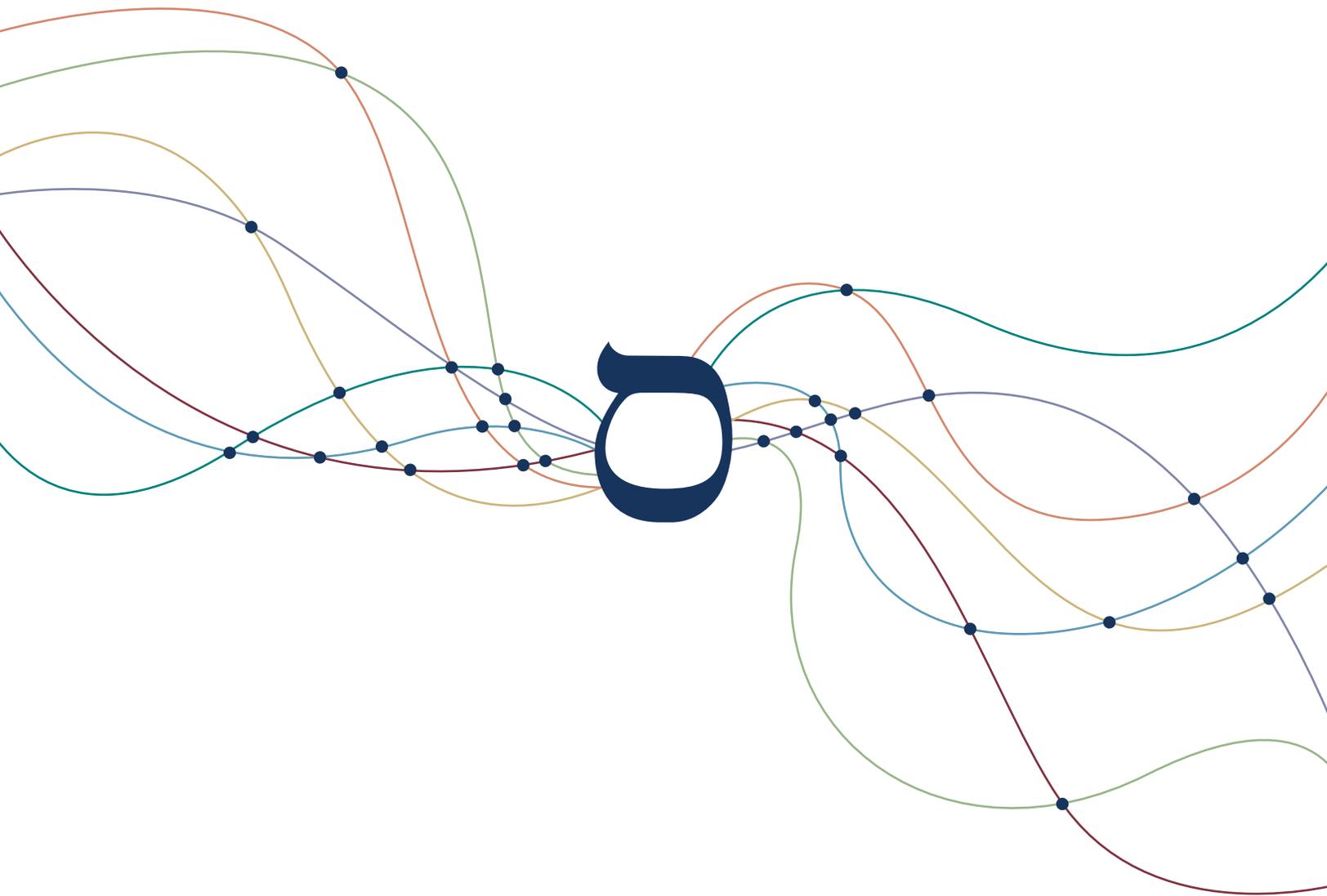
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Power New Pathways to Digital Torah Beyond the Library

Building upon the extraordinary successes of our first chapter, we will widen our focus to include the creation of new digital Torah experiences developed upon Sefaria's data that have the potential to expand and transform Jewish learning. At the same time, Sefaria has never sought to create the future of Torah on our own. We will tap the broader Jewish ecosystem to push Torah learning forward, driving us closer to Sefaria's ultimate vision of a world where Torah is alive and resonant for all.

Our Approach to Achieving This Goal

Ⅰ **EXPAND OUR FOCUS TO NEW, TRANSFORMATIVE DIGITAL TORAH EXPERIENCES.**

Sefaria believes that there are significant opportunities to create novel digital Torah experiences at scale. Bringing all of the knowledge and expertise we have accrued over the last decade, we will invest in new product development in response to audience pain points and unique market opportunities that can bring Torah to life in new and exciting ways, allowing us to serve audiences we might never have reached through the Sefaria library directly.

—— *Key Tactics to Get Us There:*

i. Internal R&D for new experiences and interfaces for digital Torah.

In areas where Sefaria has core competencies and the work fits within our mission, we will lean into a **new explicit mandate for internal R&D.** We will develop a robust greenlighting process to guide this new work and begin to explore the most compelling opportunities, beginning with the evolution

of Sefaria's Source Sheet Editor into a more developed product that commands its own platform. We also anticipate exploring the possibilities for **social Torah and online chavruta/beit midrash, voice platforms, and opportunities to create learning experiences unique to geolocation.**

ii. Launch a new website for the Torah conversations of today and tomorrow.

We will launch a **new website – with a new brand** – distinct from Sefaria's classical library, that will serve as a dedicated home for the Torah conversations of today and tomorrow. Sefaria's highly-regarded Source Sheet Editor tool will serve as the flagship product for this space, with deeper explorations into other types of user-generated Torah, online conversation and digital publishing to follow. While Sefaria.org will remain the go-to place to explore the great Jewish conversations of the past, this new site will create a space for these conversations to continue in new ways, with new participants, new questions and new layers of dialogue.

EVOLVING SOURCE SHEETS

To maximize the potential of both Sefaria's library of classical texts and its user-generated content, it is essential to develop these independently, so we can prioritize each audience independently. One of our main projects for the next few years, therefore, will be the development of a dedicated platform for Source Sheets and other user-generated Torah. We will take the time to transition the Sheets Editor and its loyal cadre of users to a new brand and online space where it will benefit from additional attention, increased investment, and fewer restrictions than came along with being nestled within our classical library. Once it is securely established, we will explore the opportunities to expand this platform further through new investments in online conversation and digital publishing. We will strategically link the new website and Sefaria.org to maximize value and cross-promotion.

Illustrating This Strategy

By 2027:

1 —— Explore at least one new project in one of our priority areas per year. Development beyond the prototype phase will be reserved for projects that test well.

2 —— Launch Sefaria's new user-generated Torah site and attract at least 50,000 users over the next five years.

II CULTIVATE THE BROADER DIGITAL TORAH ECOSYSTEM TO ENABLE THE FLOWERING OF JEWISH LEARNING IN NEW MEDIA.

The work to fully bring Torah into the digital age is more extensive than any organization can do alone, but Sefaria is uniquely positioned to take the lead. We will cultivate the broader digital Torah ecosystem and foster innovation by maximizing the usability of our free and open data, creating a pipeline of tech and Torah talent, and activating third parties to create new digital Torah experiences.

—— *Key Tactics to Get Us There:*

i. Further API development to make Sefaria's data more usable for external developers.

Though free and open, Sefaria's data is not yet maximized for use by external technologists and engineers. To facilitate the creation of new digital Torah projects, we will **upgrade and update our API** — the tool that allows external developers to dynamically access Sefaria's data and technology for their own projects — to be more usable by third parties. We will package tools to access our data and technology in software development kits (SDKs), offer playgrounds for developers, engage in technical outreach, and create more comprehensive documentation to encourage contributions to our code base.

ii. Activate external technology talent to innovate on key strategic priorities and partner where appropriate.

We will work to support, guide, and incentivize third parties to innovate on our key strategic priorities through **hackathons, contests, RFPs, and grants.** Boutique user experiences that have limited but ardent followers, for example, (a siddur app, an offline library for Haredim) are particularly ripe for third-party development. The market for these interventions might not warrant the full force of Sefaria's attention and resources, but Sefaria can potentially help others bring dozens of such projects into existence. Original products to engage newcomers to Torah will be another priority area. In some cases, when appropriate, we will offer direct support and/or work with other organizations to achieve a shared vision.

iii. Invest in our Linker tool to allow easy participation in a deeply interconnected Torah internet.

Sefaria's Linker is a small bit of code with an outsized impact, connecting Torah websites throughout the internet to Sefaria and each other. Our simplest offering to third parties, it is one short line of code that recognizes citations to texts and can be deployed by anyone to easily connect their digital Jewish content to Sefaria's library of primary sources, as well as other sites across the Jewish internet. We will invest further in this tool, **improving the code** through advanced machine learning algorithms and **investing in outreach efforts to organizations and sites,** building towards a deeply networked future where every website that quotes Jewish texts can become a doorway into the full richness of the interconnected canon.

iv. Help seed the next generation of Torah technologists.

Sefaria's unique team of Torah-forward engineers is well positioned to help cultivate and support the next generation of Torah technologists who will go out and build beyond Sefaria. We will invest in this talent pipeline through the creation of an **engineering intern program, lesson plans, and a community forum for developers.**

Illustrating This Strategy

By 2027, we will:

1 —— Invest $150,000 over the strategic planning period in prize dollars for hackathons, contests, and/or grant-making programs to catalyze the creation of new projects using Sefaria's data.

2 —— Reach additional audiences for Sefaria's texts by supporting the creation or advancement of five external projects powered by Sefaria's data.

3 —— Create a one-stop shop for developers where they can easily find documentation, exports, prebuilt containers and toolkits (SDKs), and all that they would need to develop with the Sefaria technology.

4 —— Establish a formal intern program and welcome at least 10 budding Torah technologists into Sefaria.

5 —— Double the number of impressions on external English-language websites running the Sefaria Linker from nearly half a million views a day to 1 million per day, and launch the Linker in Hebrew by getting adoption from 30 new Hebrew language websites.

Sefaria Digital Collection
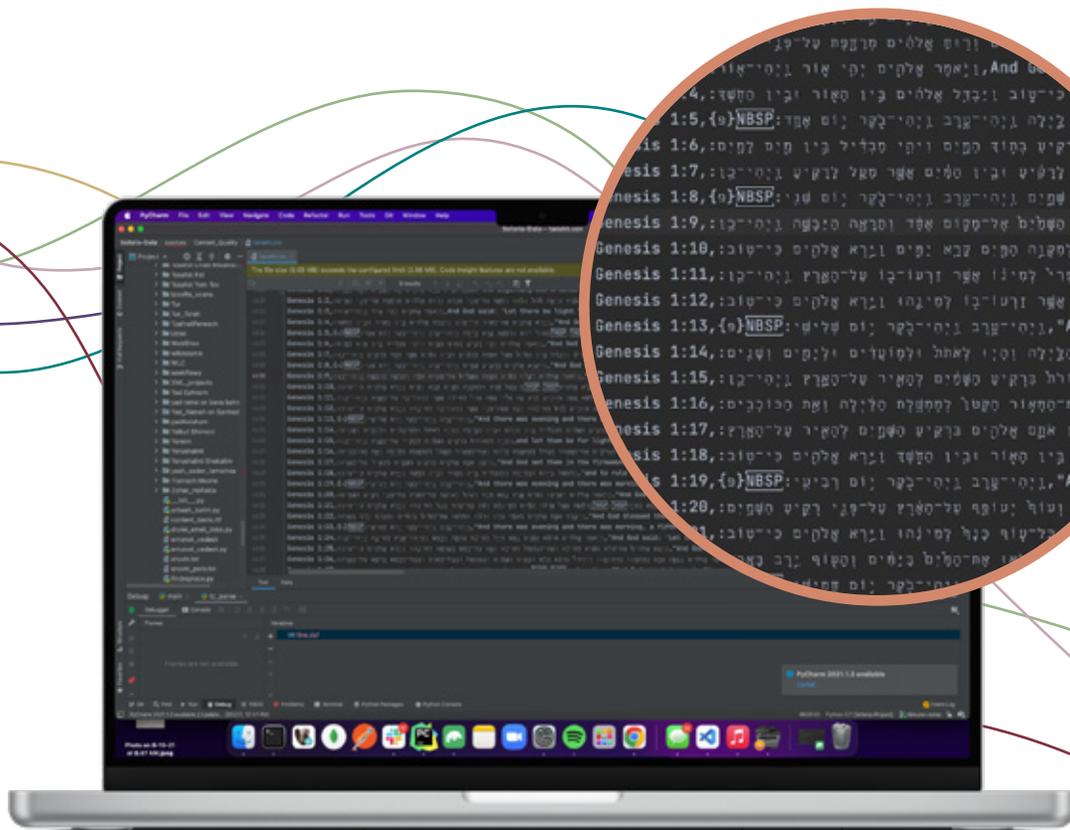
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Create a Digital Torah Collection to Bring the People of the Book Into the Future

The effort to shepherd Jewish texts into the digital era is a generational project. Sefaria's free, open, and reusable digital collection will secure the place of Jewish texts a century from now and beyond, allowing Judaism's ancient texts to thrive in a world of constant technological advancements.

Our Approach to Achieving This Goal

❶ ASSEMBLE A WORLD-CLASS, OPEN-SOURCE DIGITAL COLLECTION OF JEWISH TEXTS.

Sefaria has succeeded to date in assembling a broad library of the Torah classics — what we've called 95% of what 95% of people are studying 95% of the time. But there's still work to be done to continue making the Sefaria collection best-in-class. Our efforts will now focus on improving the quality of our current works as well as growing our collection strategically.

—— *Key Tactics to Get Us There:*

i. Enhance the quality of the library, particularly the most central and viewed texts.

To ensure that we steward the highest quality version of the Jewish library into the future, we will focus on upgrading the texts we currently house. Whenever possible — but especially for the most important texts in Hebrew and translation — we will **acquire the best available versions** or spend the

time to **improve the versions we already have** through proofreading, adding vowelization and punctuation, and completing incomplete versions of works.

ii. Add texts that make the canon more accessible to more audiences.

Translations provide Sefaria users globally with a bridge to the world of Jewish texts and will remain our top priority, coupled with a dedicated effort to acquire **guides, introductions, and reference works.** We will also explore the acquisition of **texts that are underrepresented in digital format,** like Chasidut and Kabbalah — subjects of growing interest for Jews across the denominational spectrum whose works are difficult to find in translation online.

iii. Pursue a well-rounded library with the long-term goal of hosting a fully comprehensive digital library of Jewish texts.

We will continue to add works to our collection, building slowly and strategically toward a **more complete collection.** This is a long-term project. Sefaria currently has a Hebrew library of nearly 235 million words, less than half the 500 million words in the Bar Ilan Responsa Project database. In the next few years, we see opportunities to improve our Responsa, Jewish Thought, and other collections.

THE WILLIAM DAVIDSON TALMUD

The William Davidson Talmud, Sefaria's digital edition of the Babylonian Talmud, is the crown jewel of our collection and has positioned Sefaria as the premier destination for Talmud online. While the 2017 release of this bilingual translation by Rabbi Adin Even-Israel Steinsaltz opened the floodgates to Talmud study for two million learners and counting, there is ample opportunity to expand its impact. We will achieve this by:

1. **Enhancing the text** with comprehensive punctuation and vowelization, the addition of a Hebrew-Aramaic dictionary, a major effort to link the Talmud to all Talmud references in other texts, an expanded collection of manuscript images, and the option to view the text in multiple girsaot (versions).

2. **Supplementing the text** with new commentaries and companion texts such as the Feminist Talmud Commentary to further open up the work.

These tactics will solidify our place as the center of Talmud study online and strengthen the innumerable projects, organizations, and sites that rely on Sefaria's free Talmud data to power their own initiatives.

Illustrating This Strategy

Here is some of what we'll accomplish by 2027:

1 —— Sefaria's library will grow from 300 million words to 450 million words.

2 —— Every Hebrew text will have serviceable Hebrew vowels and punctuation for optimum readability.

3 —— We will add at least five notable collections — historically significant authors, canons, etc. — to continue to develop Sefaria as a go-to place to preserve and provide access to literary legacies.

II **DEVELOP NEW LAYERS OF DATA TO STEWARD THE JEWISH TEXTUAL TRADITION INTO A RICH AND VIBRANT FUTURE.**

Bringing the Jewish textual tradition from print to digital offers exciting opportunities to take the words off the page and breathe new life into them. In its first phase, Sefaria took 3,000 years of Jewish texts and transformed them into a sophisticated data set that allows the end user to access them in an organized, searchable, and connected fashion. Exciting work remains to further refine, mine, and annotate our texts, ensuring that we — as well as others in the Torah and technology space — can utilize them in innovative and increasingly accessible ways, enabling possibilities of Torah study only achievable through the power of digital tools.

—— *Key Tactics to Get Us There:*

i. Create new layers of data derived from the primary sources that allow for novel modes of presentation, study, and analysis.

We are creating a massive repository of metadata derived from the primary sources in our collection that will add critically illuminating layers to the study of these texts. The most significant work planned is the tagging of named entities and creation of topical indices in service of the development of the ontology infrastructure for the Digital Torah Encyclopedia described. Through additional advanced analyses such as morphological tagging of words, the addition of dictionaries, and in-depth citation and textual linking, we will add definitions, connections, and insights to every word on every page in every book in our collection. A tremendous undertaking, the work to extract new layers of data from the primary texts will substantially enhance the accessibility of these works and their utility as the building blocks for future study and innovation.

ii. Bring the inherent intertextuality of the Jewish canon to life by pursuing a complete set of links between texts.

The Jewish canon is naturally deeply interconnected, as texts and commentators converse with one another through millenia-long conversations and arguments across generations. This intertextual tradition comes alive in unprecedented ways with Sefaria's technology, where one text leads to another with a single click, and users can dive deeply and broadly through the vast expanse of Jewish knowledge. We intend to maximize this opportunity by aspiring for **complete interconnectedness** among the texts in the collection.

iii. Connect Sefaria's data to a wealth of relevant external resources that can enrich the study of our texts.

We can dramatically enrich the texts in our library by connecting them to external resources that lend critical context and color. Through the strategic employment of our Linker tool, spidering the internet for citations, and partnering with libraries and research institutions – foremost among them the National Library of Israel – we will link the primary sources in our collection to **relevant historical maps, manuscript images, and academic resources** across the web that can offer additional layers of scholarship. This work will weave together countless facets of significant but often inaccessible Torah resources into one integrated and easily searchable repository, making Sefaria the go-to place to access relevant materials connected to Torah, and opening these data sources up to audiences beyond advanced scholars who know where and how to find them.

Illustrating This Strategy

By 2027:

1 —— 100% of texts in our library will have links connecting them to other texts (no "orphaned" texts), making discovery, cross-referencing, and exploration across the whole library possible.

2 —— We will create morphological and semantic models of the texts in our system — generating possibilities for more precise reference, better searching, and synthetic intelligence.

3 —— Every Hebrew word in the Sefaria library will be tagged with a relevant dictionary definition in English.

4 —— We will create an ontology of Torah literature with an expansive dataset of the people, places, and concepts mentioned in the Sefaria library and make it available to third-parties for re-use.

Sefaria, Inc.

4

Strengthen and Sustain Sefaria, Inc.

A rich future for digital Torah requires a stable foundation upon which it can grow. Our ambitious strategy necessitates equally strategic evolutions of our supporting structures — our board of directors and governance processes, financial plans and programs, and organizational composition — to solidify Sefaria's future and enable the successful realization of the immense impact this plan sets out for Sefaria to achieve.

Our Approach to Achieving This Goal

I **GROW AND DIVERSIFY OUR REVENUE STREAMS.**

—— *Key Tactics to Get Us There:*

i. Maintain and grow a culture of communal reciprocity.

To decrease our reliance on major gifts, we will continue to lean into the effort begun in our last strategic plan (2018-2021) to **build a strong small-dollar giving program** (gifts under $1,000). We will further establish our monthly Sustainer program and investigate potential membership models, with the aim of building a culture where our donors feel compelled to support Sefaria as an organization that gives them so much, at whatever level they can.

ii. Develop a mid-level funding program for five-figure gifts.

We will focus on **growing Sefaria's base of support from donors giving four- to five-figure gifts** ($1,000-$99,999), working to cultivate a mindset of investment in the future of Sefaria.

iii. Explore alternative funding models, including an endowment to support our library collection, and earned-revenue opportunities.

We will further **investigate the possibility of selling Sefaria's software** to organizations interested in managing large collections of written texts by evaluating the success of our inaugural partnership with the Jack Miller Center to create Contextus.org, the evolution of "Sefaria for Democracy." We will also **explore the possibility of raising an endowment** to support our open-source digital collection to ensure that our Torah database can thrive in perpetuity, independent of Sefaria's website, apps, and R&D products.

Illustrating This Strategy

By 2027:

1 —— Decrease reliance on foundation gifts and grants by facilitating an increased culture of communal reciprocity, resulting in a 20% year-over-year increase in one- to three-figure gifts.

2 —— Build a thriving program for cultivating four- to five-figure gifts.

II   **ACHIEVE OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE.**

—— *Key Tactics to Get Us There:*

i. Build technical and managerial staff capacities that enable Sefaria to execute on these strategic goals.

We will realize our ambitious strategic vision by staffing it with the right team, equipped with the most efficient systems, working in a well-ordered structure. We will **remodel our organizational structure** to meet the needs of the new areas of work laid out in this plan, and we will significantly **expand our all-star team** of engineers, educators, and thought leaders to ensure that we have the talent and expertise to bring this vision to life. We will also invest in system upgrades, most notably **migrating to a new CRM** system, and strive to **maintain the unique and intimate Sefaria culture** that has historically made it such a great place to work by investing anew in staff retention, leadership and professional development, and organizational transparency.

ii. Establish a formal structure in Israel to enable the success of our ambitions.

To succeed in our ambitious goal to expand into the Israeli market in this next chapter of growth, we need to ensure that we are optimally set up to operate there. Most significantly, we will work to **establish an Israel *Amutah*** (charitable organization) so we can better support our fundraising and HR efforts in Israel.

iii. Establish the future shape of our board of directors.

We will **revisit our board bylaws** and **remodel our board of directors,** ensuring that we have the right structure, processes, and leadership in place to steer Sefaria to success in this next chapter of growth and transformative impact. We will expand the board strategically, identifying key gaps around expertise, geography, and other relevant demographics. We will also work to develop our board with robust governance structures that better position our members for deep engagement.

iv. Engage in future planning for natural organizational maturation.

Sefaria expects to serve the Jewish community for several decades, at least, and we will spend these five years strengthening our foundation to

ensure a vibrant future. We will develop a **succession plan for our CEO** that will enable Sefaria to thrive in a next chapter with new leadership, engage in **long-term financial planning,** and consider how to transition care for our core library to a **community stewardship model** as a strategy for the long-term maintenance of our data.
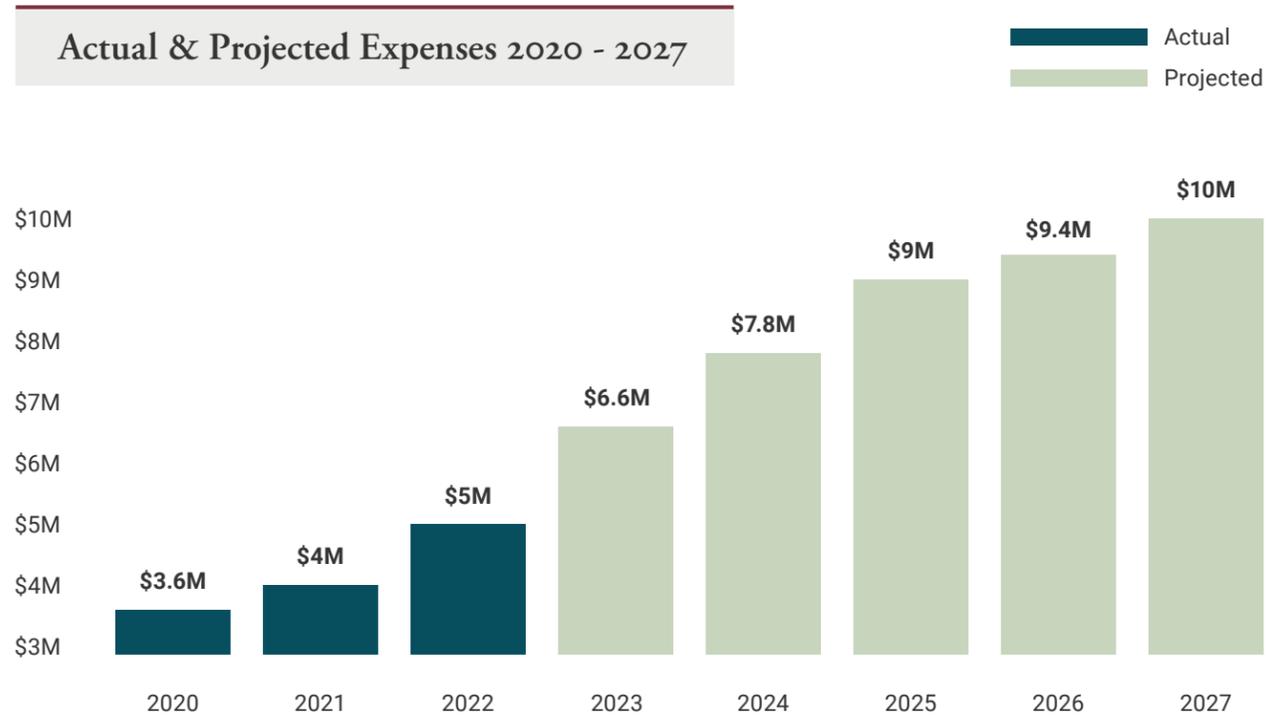
Illustrating This Strategy

By 2027:

1 —— Add 23.5 essential staff members over the course of the strategic plan [see Appendix A for detail]

2 —— Maintain a 75% employee satisfaction rate (primarily based off Leading Edge's key Employee Engagement score and internal benchmarking)

3 —— Establish an Amutah in Israel

Expenses

To achieve this plan, Sefaria will significantly invest in developing a universally accessible digital library, creating new digital Torah experiences, continuing to assemble a world-class digital collection of Jewish texts, and increasing organizational capacity across departments.

Actual & Projected Expenses 2020 - 2027

Actual
Projected

Year	Amount
2020	$3.6M
2021	$4M
2022	$5M
2023	$6.6M
2024	$7.8M
2025	$9M
2026	$9.4M
2027	$10M

The budget can be broken out into the three main verticals described by this strategic plan, as well as shared administrative expenses:

- Sefaria.org — 38%
- Sefaria Ventures — 20%
- Sefaria Digital Collection — 20%
- General & Administrative Expenses — 22%
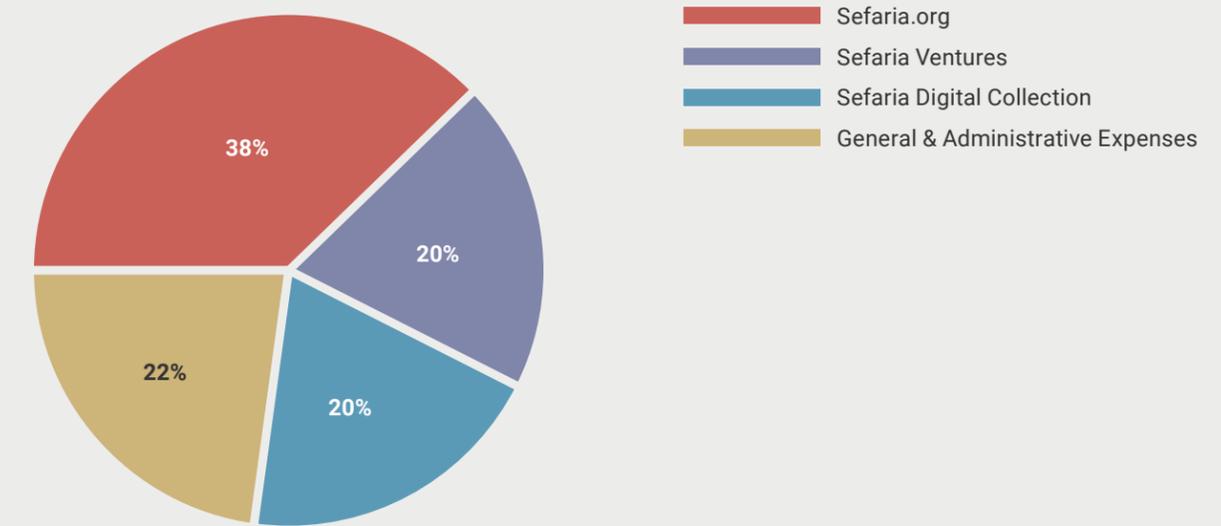
The first three years of this plan are focused on augmenting our capacity by onboarding 21.5 new staff members. Our priority is the product and engineering team, which will strengthen the library experience and launch Sefaria Ventures. At the same time, we will hire more operations and fundraising staff to support the growing organization and reach revenue goals. After the initial capacity-building period, costs will level out at pace with increased revenue from Sefaria supporters.

Revenue

Our fundraising goal for the 2023-2027 period is $44M. As we envisage Sefaria, Inc through 2027, we plan for significant growth in individual giving. This includes a new, ambitious mid-dollar donor program which is an area of untapped potential. Our online and small-dollar gifts have increased reliably and steadily over the past four years, fueled by innovative campaigns and an investment in creating a culture of reciprocity among library visitors. And we will continue to develop deep relationships with major funders as we pursue our vision to make Torah resonant and alive.

Hiring Summary

I OVERVIEW

Over the next five years, the organization will grow from 30.3 FTE to 53.8 FTE.

YEAR I: **2023**	Hire 8 new staff
YEAR 2: **2024**	Hire 9 new staff
YEAR 3: **2025**	Hire 4.5 new staff
YEAR 4: **2026**	Hire 2 new staff
YEAR 5: **2027**	No Hires

II BY AREA

PRODUCT & ENGINEERING: +9

2023	Engineering Team Lead
	QA Manager
	Director of Product
2024	Software Engineer
	Services Manager
	Software Engineer
2025	Growth Manager
2026	Software Engineer
	Project Manager

CONTENT MANAGEMENT: +2

2024	Content Engineer
2025	Content Engineer

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS: +4

2023	Production Associate
2024	Chief Community Officer
	CRM Coordinator
2025	Communications Associate

LEARNING & COLLECTIONS: +2.5

2023	Project Coordinator
2024	Learning Coordinator
2025	User Support Associate .5

MANAGEMENT: +6

2023	HR Associate
	Finance & Operations Associate
	Director of Operations - Israel
2024	Digital Fundraising Coordinator
	Chief of Staff
2025	Major Gifts Officer

Implementation Timeline

Sefaria.org

2023
— Kick off Digital Torah Encyclopedia work
— Expand descriptive copy coverage on site and apps
— Transition to new Google Analytics Platform GA4
— Begin email newsletter development with a "Welcome Series"
— Develop Educator strategy and kick off expanded version of rabbinical school outreach program
— Explore new models for text acquisition for modern classics, even if not with open licenses
— Begin to add Rabbi Steinsaltz's Collection to the Library

2024
— Introduce an "Ask The Librarian" feature
— Launch app download campaign
— Begin work to enhance search functionality
— Negotiate deals for key modern content
— Work towards a diverse and accessible Israeli library (including the addition of the Ben Yehuda dictionary)

2025
— Launch "Start Here" pages
— Launch 1st newcomer partnership
— Launch universal language landing page
— With a dedicated team in place, a more resonant library, and a better understanding of the market, launch major Israel growth strategy
— Work to acquire a full range of works of modern Israeli thought

2026
— Launch 2nd newcomer partnership
— Launch lifecycle landing pages
— Work to improve foreign language onboarding
— Build out modern content library

2027
— Launch 3nd newcomer partnership
— Continue content work from previous years and assess completeness of modern content library

Ventures

2023
— Create robust greenlighting process for Ventures
— Map out the plan for Sheets evolution
— Tarboot (geolocation project) for the National Library in Israel
— Launch intern program
— Refine discursive algorithm to improve Linker tool

2024
— Launch new Sheets product
— API development
— Launch developers community platform
— Create lesson plans for developers
— Outreach to expand Linker usage
— Explore/ prototype/ launch new products in key priority areas
— PR for Ventures + Sefaria, Inc.

2025
— Explore evolution of new Sheets product
— Explore/ prototype/ launch new products in key priority areas
— Activate external talent through a combination of hackathons, contests, RFPs, grants
— Service the needs of Linker clients

2026
— Explore/ prototype/ launch new products in key priority areas
— Activate external talent through combination of hackathons, contests, RFPs, grants
— Bespoke customer support to major third-party projects

2027
— Explore/ prototype/ launch new products in key priority areas
— Market best products coming out of Ventures

Implementation Timeline

Digital Collection

2023
— Begin to go after all 290 texts identified on our "quality improvement" list
— Determine which (if any) core texts will require commissioned translations
— Add all transcriptions from Hachi Garsinan
— Build infrastructure for Digital Torah Encyclopedia
— Begin morphology work
— Identify named entities (people + places, beginning with Tanakh and core canon)

2024
— Add 150 public domain texts
— Build out Kabbalah collection by adding a Zohar translation, Sulam translation, and translations of select Zohar commentaries
— Build out Chasidut collection by adding translations of key Chasidic texts
— Add manuscripts in partnership with the National Library of Israel
— Build towards a complete set of links between texts in our library

2025
— Acquisition of core texts that still require translation, prioritizing new Mishnah
— Complete at least 50 "greatest hits" anthology translations (Talmud Tanakh)
— Identify topics of long tail Digital Torah Encylopedia

2026
— Switch quality focus to the 47 works on our "incomplete works" list
— Add another 150 PD texts + 50 anthologies (Talmud/ Tanakh/ Chasidut)
— Empower traditionally marginalized groups to create and share Torah to ensure a diverse and accessible Beit Midrash
— Enhance semantic search

2027
— Assess Library for quality, completedness, and well-roundedness
— Begin to explore synthetic intellegence

Sefaria, Inc.

2023
— Transition team to new organizational structure
— Enhance our recruiting, including published salary bands and onboarding processes
— Transition to new CRM system
— Review board by-laws and establish governance committees
— Raise 1/3 of the money for the strategic plan
— Host 10-year gala
— Close out first earned-revenue partnership

2024
— Strategic board expansion
— Explore membership program for small-dollar donors
— Explore estate giving for major donors
— Develop mid-level donor campaign as a follow up to the gala
— Establish Amutah in Israel

2025
— Develop Israel development strategy
— Explore endowment for our Digital Collection
— Consider earned revenue opportunities
— With growing team in place, invest in team culture, including our first ever all-staff gathering

2026
— Develop a proactive CEO succession plan
— Long-term financial planning
— Explore community stewardship of Sefaria's data

2027
— Strategic planning for next chapter