



13 February 2024

To: Consulting Committee on Presidential Award for Volunteerism

Re: Recommendation of ESRA for the Presidential Award for Volunteerism

The Ministry of Education very warmly recommends ESRA for the Presidential Award for Volunteerism, in recognition of its impressive spirit of volunteerism and its outstanding contribution to supporting and strengthening Israel's home front, particularly through their English Tutoring Program (ETP) in coordination with the Ministry of Education.

For many years, ESRA has been working to strengthen Israeli society through optimizing integration of Olim and minimizing socio-economic gaps. In the course of its activities, it runs a wide range of projects that involve English speakers both in Israel and abroad, as an effective team contributing to Israeli society.

One of its projects, English Tutoring Project (ETP), has proved successful in improving academic achievement in English among schoolchildren, as well as improving oral skills among teachers for whom English is not their mother tongue, in all sectors of society (Haredi, Bedouin, National Religious, etc.) and throughout the country. The project is constantly growing and today has over 1,000 volunteers. ESRA sees volunteering as a prime value and invests much energy in recruiting, training, nurturing and appreciating its volunteers.

Immediately with the outbreak of war, ESRA was among the first to initiate activities and adapt to immediate arising needs in close cooperation with the Ministry's English Supervisor and its Department of Education and Teaching Support, with the aim of optimizing operations. For example, the ESRA Chat Away program, designed for middle school students who register through their school, was opened to the general public of students countrywide, for quick and independent registering (with parental consent) offering free participation in 15 sessions to improve conversation skills in English. These sessions were run by education and teaching aids who worked with the children and provided them with much more than English during these difficult times. In addition, the project brought hundreds of volunteers to hotels and other evacuation centers.

The activities of ESRA, both routine and emergency, contribute a great deal to strengthening our society, and are a very significant source of support for Israeli education. The Ministry of Education sees ESRA as an excellent and deserving organization for the Presidential Award of Volunteerism. Its extensive activities, its significant contribution to the community, its immediate response to urgent needs, make it a most deserving recipient of this award. I warmly recommend ESRA.

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