

Adam Milstein Is The Face of Active Philanthropy



Adam Milstein
Co-Founder and President

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Interview conducted by:
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CEOCFO: *What was the vision when you created the Adam and Gila Milstein Family Foundation?*

Adam Milstein: Gila and I have always been passionate about working to strengthen the Jewish People, the State of Israel—the homeland of the Jewish People—and its special ties with the U.S. and working to nurture the Jewish identity of the next generation.

From the beginning, we knew that the Milstein Family Foundation would work to help students and young professionals to identify with their Jewish roots, ignite their Jewish pride, cultivate and boost their courage, connect them with the State of Israel, and train them how to effectively advocate for the State of Israel and the Jewish people in their schools, campuses, among their friends, and in their communities.

“I have learned what many people who are actively involved in charity know: the donor often ends up receiving as much or more satisfaction than those people and organizations that he helps. Gila and I now support about 100 different organizations and programs: I enjoy every moment we work, every dollar we give, and every project that we launch.”- Adam Milstein

CEOCFO: *How has your vision played out over time?*

Adam Milstein: We have remained focused on this clearly defined mission and that has been the key to successfully advancing our goals. Over the years, I have realized that to be successful in philanthropy you can't just contribute money, but you also must contribute time, energy, vision, and connections. Today I spend approximately 90 percent of my time in philanthropy—and I feel like I have never worked harder in my life.

CEOCFO: *Would you tell us about the 3 unique principles, “Active Philanthropy,” “Life Path Impact” and “Philanthropic Synergy”?*

Adam Milstein: These three principles are what make the Milstein Family Foundation unique. Active Philanthropy means that—in addition to funding organizations, projects, and programs—our staff members invest their time and resources to ensure that everything we do succeeds and makes an impact. We contribute [ideas and expertise](#)—and we work to implement programs to ensure their success.

Life Path Impact indicates that our partners are continuously engaging our target audience from a young age through adulthood. Each major program that we support precedes or follows another one.

Philanthropic Synergy means we work to help connect and combine the resources of several philanthropic organizations to amplify the impact and effect of their joint efforts, which creates a force multiplication.

CEO CFO: *With so many organizations in need of help how do you decide where to focus? Do you strive for a particular balance?*

Adam Milstein: We meet hundreds of organizations every year. Gila and I personally meet with all sorts of organizations of all sizes to ensure that we understand the philanthropic landscape in the areas where we give. This is how we stay ahead of the curve and add value to our partner organizations.

Our foundation has an incredible staff that works to ensure that we support partners that are going to be effective above all else. We don't set a specific quota for each type of organization, project, and program that we support, but we do pay close attention to wider trends in the philanthropic world to ensure that we are using best practices in identifying our partners' strengths and weaknesses.

CEO CFO: *How do you handle the business side of philanthropy? What are the challenges?*

Adam Milstein: Many of the principles I learned in business—as a [real estate and business investor](#)—I apply in philanthropy every day. For instance, you want to look for low-hanging fruit. I actually wrote [a piece](#) about this in The Jerusalem Post.

Much of the business side of philanthropy has the same challenges as you see in the for-profit world: keeping communication open, setting clear priorities, and juggling lots of different balls. Much of these difficulties have been mitigated by staying hands-on, always following up with our partners, and working in tandem with capable people.

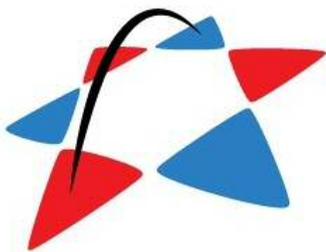
CEO CFO: *What would you want others to know about philanthropy?*

Adam Milstein: I have learned what many people who are actively involved in charity know: the donor often ends up receiving as much or more satisfaction than those people and organizations that he helps. Gila and I now support about 100 different organizations and programs: I enjoy every moment we work, every dollar we give, and every project that we launch.

Besides the great satisfaction of giving, my philanthropic work has opened doors to new ideas and new friends. We've had the opportunity to collaborate on projects with people who we would have never connected with if not for our shared values.

CEO CFO: *Recent recognition as one of the 200 Most Influential Do-Gooders in the World is quite an honor!*

Adam Milstein: Thank you! I admire much of the work done by many of those also on the list. I am truly humbled to be included among them. More than anything, I am grateful to my wife Gila, to the Israel American Council (IAC), and to the many organizations in the Jewish world that we are privileged to partner with to make a difference.



**ADAM AND GILA
MILSTEIN FAMILY
FOUNDATION**