

## NOMINATION FORM: Global Business & Interfaith Peace Awards

**Note:** Nominations are open to CEOs (present or past) of companies who have championed interfaith understanding and peace.

### Nominee Contact Information

1. Nominee Full Name: Jonathan Berezovsky
2. Corporate Title: CEO
3. Company Name: Migraflix
4. Company Headquarters Location (Country): Brazil
5. Engagement with the UN Global Compact and/or the Religions Freedom & Business Foundation\*
  - ☐ Company is a signatory of the UN Global Compact
  - ☐ Company has joined Business for Peace
  - ☐ Company has signed the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation's pledge to protect freedom of religion
  - ☒ Company intends to join one or more of the initiatives listed above in the next six months, please specify [Click here to enter text.](#)

\* Nominees are invited to:

1. join the [UN Global Compact](#) and its [Business for Peace](#) platform and,
2. make the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation's [corporate pledge to protect freedom of religion or belief](#) (FoRB)

### Nominator Contact Information

1. Nominator Full Name: Vanessa Tarantini
2. Corporate Title: Programme Analyst
3. Company Name: Global Compact Network Brazil
4. Email Address: [vanessa.tarantini@undp.org](mailto:vanessa.tarantini@undp.org)
5. Phone Number: 1125005285
6. Relationship to the Nominee: partner

Please submit a Biography of the Nominee (max 200 words)

Jonathan Berezovsky is an Argentinean citizen, of Jewish origin, who is currently based in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Jonathan has founded Migraflix (a social project which empowers immigrants socially and economically), Mazeej (a music band of Muslim and Christian Arabs who play together with Brazilian Jews) and Townflix (a video platform that promotes small businesses).

Prior to living in Brazil, Jonathan lived in Israel (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv) where he worked in business development at a startup incubator. On top of this, Jonathan was involved in social work as he took part in Microfy, an Israeli NGO which provides microloans and training to refugees living in the country. Most of the refugees receiving the loans were Christians and Muslims from Sudan and Eritrea who were trying to start a new life in Tel Aviv. Jonathan holds a Bsc degree in business and economics from Universidad Torcuato Di Tella (Buenos Aires, Argentina).

### Information about the policy, programme or initiative

1. Please describe a policy, programme or initiative that the Nominee has launched or spearheaded to advance the company's efforts to champion interfaith understanding and peace (max 300 words)

Migraflix is a social business that empowers immigrants and refugees who live in Brazil both economically and socially, developing a sense of self autonomy and self-confidence. Moreover, the project integrates them into the local society by promoting their cultures. In Migraflix, immigrants have a chance to teach their culture to Brazilians through workshops about food, music, graphic arts and fashion. In each one of the Migraflix workshops given by immigrants, from countries such as Syria, Morocco, Togo and Colombia, a bridge is built through a friendly dialogue established between Brazilians and foreign cultures and religions. The Migraflix team is represented by people from various nationalities who work together in harmony and with one goal in mind: to build bridges through cultural experiences. Migraflix also hosts inter-religious events at religious spots such as synagogues, churches and Muslim centers. The last inter-religious event took place at a Jewish synagogue in Sao Paulo, Brazil. In this event, two Muslim Syrian refugees told their stories to the public (mostly Jews) and then offered a Syrian dinner at the event. Moreover, there was a presentation of the Mazeej music band, which Jonathan Berezovsky created together with Muslims from Syria and Palestinian territories, a Christian from Lebanon and Jews from Brazil. Mazeej is proving to the world that Jews, Muslims and Christians can get together through culture, leaving aside our political differences. Migraflix and Mazeej have been featured in national and international press numerous times, spreading the message that people of different nationalities and religions can learn from each other through cultural encounters. In addition to the press, Migraflix has a partnership with TEDx Sao Paulo, in which it trains immigrants to present their stories at Ted and convey a message of tolerance.

2. Which category or categories does the policy, programme or initiative fall into:

- ☒ Core business
- ☐ Social investment & philanthropy
- ☒ Advocacy and public policy engagement
- ☒ Partnership and collective action

3. Does the policy, programme or initiative address any of the following related to Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB)<sup>1</sup>:

- ☒ Promote sustainable and innovative business through protecting Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB)
- ☒ Non-discrimination and/or non-harassment on the basis of religion or belief

---

<sup>1</sup> Article 18 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

- ☒ Religious accommodation and inclusion
- ☒ Protecting and promoting freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) in the community
- ☐ Other (describe below, max. 25 words)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4. Please describe the objective of the policy, programme or initiative and the need, goal or gap that it was designed to address. (max 200 words)

Migraflix has two goals: to empower immigrants and refugees economically and to integrate them into society by demonstrating on its workshops and events that new cultures can enrich the local one. Migraflix spreads a message of tolerance towards the immigrant, regardless of his or her nationality or religion. Mazeej wants to show the world that Jews, Muslims and Christians who have lived in the middle east and have experienced the hatred between these religions can get together at a neutral place and understand each other through music, even when languages are an obstacle for communication. Both initiatives want to address the bigotry that exists towards immigrants and the hatred that tends to rule the relationships between Jews and Muslim or Christian Arabs.

5. How was the policy, programme or initiative implemented? What role did the Nominee play? (max 200 words)

Migraflix was incubated by Social Good Brasil. Jonathan founded the company together with Rodrigo Borges Delfim and he has been the CEO since its inception. Migraflix is self-sustainable as each project developed by the company generates an income which is split between the immigrants and Migraflix. The following are examples of workshops which are already running in Migraflix. Muna Darweesh (from Latakia, Syria) teaches people how to make a Syrian dinner usually served on Muslim holidays. Robert Cardenas (from Bogota, Colombia) shows people how to bake tasty arepas. Anas Al Hafez (from Damascus, Syria) guides Brazilians through the basics of Arabic calligraphy. The teachers keep 80% of the profit that each workshop generates and 20% of the profit stays with Migraflix. Migraflix works very closely with NGOs and UNHCR to deploy its activities. For instance, Migraflix is organizing a hackaton in Sao Paulo focused on developing solutions for the biggest challenges faced by immigrants and refugees who live in Brazil. This hackaton is being organized together with UNHCR and Impact Hub, and counts with the support of UNHCR Innovation Lab. In the case of Mazeej, Jonathan brought the musicians together and is currently managing the project.

6. What were/are the most persistent challenges in implementing the policy, programme or initiative? How were they/are they being overcome and what was the role of the Nominee? (max 200 words)

The biggest challenges in implementing this initiative had to do with the resistance that both Migraflix and Mazeej faced from extremists groups who are against integration and interfaith understanding, as they see these projects as a political defeat. There is a group of people in Brazil who have been trying to sabotage some events organized by Migraflix at religious places. Migraflix and Mazeej don't intend to take a political stance. Both organizations are just trying to bring people together through culture. In order to explain the company's stance to the group of people who were against hosting events at synagogues, Jonathan got in touch with the leaders of the Palestinian and of the Syrian community and with two Muslim Sheikhs who are well known in the Muslim community to explain what Migraflix and Mazeej stand for. This had a positive outcome which allowed both projects to keep operating and growing.

7. What are the key lessons learned from launching the policy, programme or initiative? (max 200 words)

The key lessons learned in Migraflix are that by leaving aside the patronizing relationship that usually tends to lead the relationship between locals and immigrants and approaching this group as a project that provides autonomy and self-confidence (as immigrants become teachers of their own cultures), it's possible to change completely the mentality of the immigrant and of the society. Immigrants feel that they can contribute to the local society. This means that they are proud and not ashamed of their background. Local people who participate in the workshops or come across Migraflix in other events understand that their own bigotry (such as thinking that Muslims are aggressive people) is based on no real grounds and have nothing to do with the Muslim immigrants who have arrived in the country. The key lessons learned in Mazeej were that even though the Jewish and the Muslim members of the band may have completely opposite political views regarding the conflict in the middle east, they can get together every week to play inspiring songs and dream about a better world. Step by step, the members of the band get closer and they start thinking even about doing other projects together, such as a new play that the Lebanese singer is planning to produce with Jonathan. [Click here to enter text.](#)

### Impact and Reporting on Progress

1. How do you monitor and evaluate progress on the policy, programme or initiative? If relevant, what indicators and metrics are used? (max 200 words)

Migraflix monitors its impact by measuring the number of immigrants who take part in its initiatives, the amount of money that each immigrant generates in the project (economic empowerment), the number of Brazilians who participate in the activities (social empowerment) and the amount of people that are reached through other means (spreading its message of tolerance and interfaith understanding). Mazeej monitors its impact by bringing its core value (peaceful dialogue between Jews, Christians and Muslims) to places such as religious spots, where the project is met sometimes by rejection from extremists who are against this.

2. What outcomes or impact have been reached to date? Please be as specific as possible and supply available data. (max 200 words)

Migraflix hosted over 70 workshops in the last 6 months with over 500 participants. Each immigrant has gained over 100 usd per a 3-hour workshop in which he or she was teaching its culture to Brazilians. Moreover, Migraflix has brought its message of tolerance and interfaith understanding to over 10,000 people at its events, such as cultural fairs, TEDx Sao Paulo presentations and restaurants managed by the company. Mazeej has presented so far in small venues for hundreds of people, who have the chance to engage in a conversation with the members of the band after each show in order to understand how Jews, Muslims and Christians have managed to build a successful initiative together. Moreover both Migraflix and Mazeej have been featured on the national and international press numerous times, reaching even more people.

3. Is the Nominee's company reporting on its practices, policies, programmes and/or initiatives to champion interfaith understanding and peace? If so, please provide relevant weblink(s) for posting on the Awards' website. If integrated into the company's corporate sustainability report, Global Compact COP or GRI Report, please indicate relevant pages and/or sections. (max 200 words)

Jonathan Berezovsky giving a Ted Talk at TEDx Sao Paulo: <https://youtu.be/2yGpab2HaK8> Talal Al Tinawi (Syrian refugee who is a member of Migraflix) giving a Ted Talk at TEDx Sao Paulo: <https://youtu.be/Z5MZrsDRK7>. Jonathan interviewed by Folha de São Paulo (one of the leading newspapers in Brazil): <http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/saopaulo/2016/04/1763519-e-preciso-integrar-refugiados-em-sp-diz-criador-de-projeto-para-imigrantes.shtml>

Articles about the event that Migraflix and Mazeej hosted at a synagogue which caused friction a few days later with Muslim extremists who are against joining the Muslim and the Jewish community:

\_ R7 noticias: <http://noticias.r7.com/internacional/entidade-judaica-acolhe-refugiados-sirios-muculmanos-em-acao-inedita-25052016>

\_ UNHCR ACNUR: <http://www.acnur.org/t3/portugues/noticias/noticia/muculmanos-judeus-e-brasileiros-dialogam-sobre-refugio-no-brasil/>

Video about the band's presentation at that

event: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bxw65eECIBcJV0IMRmY5X1RPTTg/view?usp=sharing>

### **Additional Information:**

1. Are there additional actions the Nominee has taken on an individual level to support interfaith understanding and peace within the organization? If so, please specify. (max 200 words)

Jonathan, as an Argentinean Jew who has lived in Israel, has been at the forefront of interfaith understanding with the community of Syrian and Palestinian refugees. He has created a bond with them which goes beyond politics and proves that Jews and Muslims with very different backgrounds can build together social projects, guided by harmony and respect, which have a deep impact on society and will definitely have an impact on politics too.

2. How has the Nominee taken action to support and promote the UN Global Compact's Ten Principles? If so, please specify. (max 200 words)

Jonathan has taken action to support the UN Global Compact's Ten Principles. Both Migraflix and Mazeej focus on principles related to human rights and labour.

Please provide any additional information to be considered. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Nominations team [nominations@religiousfreedomandbusiness.org](mailto:nominations@religiousfreedomandbusiness.org)

[Click here to enter text.](#)