Interfaith Strategic Planning Grants
for IDEALS Campuses 2020-21

Request for Proposals

IFYC is offering Interfaith Strategic Planning Grants in the amount of $3,000 to support a select set of campuses as they design a campus-wide strategic plan for interfaith cooperation during the 2020-21 academic year rooted in findings from their IDEALS data.

IDEALS participant campuses are eligible to apply for funds to support a comprehensive interfaith strategic planning process. Grant recipients will convene a group of diverse stakeholders from across campus who will meet regularly throughout the academic year to design an interfaith strategic plan. Grant recipients will receive funds, additional IDEALS data synthesis and exploration, a two-day strategic planning workshop on campus facilitated by IFYC staff, and customized IFYC staff support.

Interfaith Strategic Planning Grant Applications are due March 15, 2020. Grants will be awarded in April 2020 and grant funds must be spent between August 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021.

IFYC’s Vision and Framework for Campus-Wide Interfaith Excellence

As religious diversity increases on American college and university campuses and as civic leaders grapple with the deep divides facing our country, many institutions are seeking comprehensive, contextual and sustainable ways to foster interfaith cooperation on campus.

IFYC defines interfaith cooperation as:

- respect for religious and worldview identity
- mutually inspiring relationships
- common action for the common good.¹

Based on a decade of partnerships with college and university campuses across the U.S., IFYC has identified 9 Leadership Practices for Interfaith Excellence in Higher Education. These practices are critical to developing a campus culture of religious pluralism and collectively they offer a framework through which campus stakeholders can unite diverse communities and positively engage religious and worldview identity on campus.

¹ For a more detailed definition, please see https://www.ifyc.org/interfaith.
IFYC’s Approach to Interfaith Strategic Planning

A campus-wide strategy for interfaith cooperation, the second Leadership Practice, is critical for the success and sustainability of interfaith efforts on any campus. An interfaith strategic plan responds to the following questions: How does interfaith cooperation connect to the mission and identity of our institution? What are our campus’ strengths and opportunities for growth with respect to how students from diverse worldviews experience campus climate? How might stakeholders align and leverage existing resources and prioritize actions that will best advance interfaith cooperation campus-wide? In order to explore these questions and help campuses deepen and broaden their interfaith efforts, IFYC is offering Interfaith Strategic Planning Grants to IDEALS campuses to encourage the development and implementation of campus-wide strategic plans for interfaith cooperation.

Over the course of the grant period, IFYC will facilitate an interactive process with each grantee campus that convenes campus leaders to analyze the campus context, determine shared goals and vision for interfaith cooperation, prioritize campus needs and interests, and identify the concrete steps and accountability measures required to meet the established goals.

Grant Components

**IDEALS data synthesis and exploration**
During the strategic planning process, IFYC staff will present each grantee campus’ time 3 IDEALS data and put each campus’ overall findings in conversation with national trends from the IDEALS project. By rooting the strategic planning process in quantitative data, campuses can ensure that their interfaith efforts are responding to real campus needs and opportunities.

**On-campus strategic planning sessions facilitated by IFYC Staff**
In Fall 2020, IFYC consultants will visit grantee campuses to facilitate two days of strategic planning sessions for the campus Interfaith Strategic Planning Committee. During this visit, IFYC staff will 1) introduce key frameworks for understanding and promoting interfaith cooperation; 2) lead conversations to explore and synthesize IDEALS data; 3) lead sessions to identify the foundation of a campus-wide vision for interfaith cooperation; 4) lead sessions to identify existing and potential assets for advancing interfaith cooperation; and 5) begin to prioritize campus goals for interfaith cooperation. IFYC will cover all travel and accommodations costs associated with the campus visit.
Ongoing IFYC Consultation
Grantee campuses will have access to ongoing IFYC support and partnership over the course of the grant implementation period. Campuses will also be connected to other grantee campuses for collaboration and problem-solving.

Project Guidelines

Campuses will apply for grant funding to support the development of a campus-wide, multi-year strategic plan for interfaith cooperation. Campuses will convene an Interfaith Strategic Planning Committee – a group of diverse stakeholders from across campus who will meet regularly throughout the 2020-21 academic year to participate in a strategic planning process that will result in an interfaith strategic plan document. IFYC will offer strategic planning frameworks and resources, coaching, and a two-day site visit. Grantee campuses are responsible for writing a comprehensive interfaith strategic plan drawing upon the results of the strategic planning activities and IFYC resources. Campuses will submit their interfaith strategic plan to IFYC by May 30, 2020 as the culmination of the grant process. To apply, campuses will first complete the Campus Interfaith Inventory in order to identify where they have existing assets for interfaith cooperation on campus and where there are areas for growth.

In the selection process, IFYC will give preference to

- campuses with existing established interfaith initiatives in one more or more of the Leadership Practices
- campuses with demonstrated commitment to interfaith engagement from senior institutional leadership
- proposals that include an Interfaith Strategic Planning Committee composed of key stakeholders from different departments and divisions across campus including senior administrators
- proposals that explicitly describe how the campus will ensure the implementation and sustainability of their campus-wide strategic plan
- proposals that offer a clear and compelling rationale for launching an interfaith strategic planning process on campus in academic year 2020-21

Campuses will submit a budget proposal as part of their grant application. Grant funds are intended to support costs associated with the strategic planning process and may include stipends for the Interfaith Strategic Planning Committee Co-Chairs, costs associated with committee meetings and retreats, site visits to other campuses, relevant conference attendance and travel, and/or other related activities. All expenses related to IFYC staff travel and accommodations for the campus visit will be covered separately by IFYC.
Examples of Strategic Planning Grant Impact from Previous Grantees

Queens University of Charlotte (Charlotte, NC)
The Interfaith Strategic Planning Committee at Queens University of Charlotte, led by Suzanne Henderson, professor and chair of the philosophy and religion department, successfully created a multi-year interfaith strategic plan. The plan focuses on exploring and raising awareness of the campus' unique identity connection to interfaith cooperation, enhancing opportunities for interfaith learning across campus, and improving Queens' welcoming climate for students from all religious and secular backgrounds. In particular, the plan includes a “Presbyterian and Pluralist” interfaith vision statement that will guide future interfaith efforts at Queens. The statement was circulated broadly and integrated into the search process materials for the new campus president position. In addition, as a result of the strategic planning process, the campus took several concrete steps to ensure sustainable leadership for interfaith efforts: the campus created a new “Dean of the Chapel” position to strengthen and link together curricular and co-curricular interfaith efforts on campus and the Interfaith Strategic Planning Committee transitioned to a standing Interfaith Committee formed by the faculty council which will continue to advise on interfaith initiatives.

Loyola University Maryland (Baltimore, MD)
Scott Adams, Assistant Director of Interfaith and Ecumenical Ministries, led the interfaith strategic planning process at Loyola University Maryland. The interfaith strategic plan he and the steering committee created ties directly to Loyola's campus-wide strategic plan, the “Ignatian Compass,” and focuses on increased curricular and co-curricular interfaith educational opportunities, local and global interfaith immersions, and enhancing interfaith community events. The plan's components respond to the campus' strengths and opportunities for growth identified in their survey findings and through over a dozen campus 'listening sessions' with diverse staff, faculty, and students that were facilitated by the strategic planning committee members. One theme that surfaced through the strategic planning process was the desire to uncover and publicize ways in which Loyola's Jesuit identity paves the way for increased interfaith engagement and how the campus’ existing values and mission can serve as a springboard for further interfaith action.

Warren Wilson College (Asheville, NC)
Warren Wilson College's interfaith strategic planning process aligned with a campus-wide focus on increased dialogue across difference. Brian Ammons, chaplain and director of spiritual life, reflected on the strategic planning process, “We are suddenly the story that is being told both internally and externally. It is very exciting -- and a bit unexpected. I do not think that I anticipated how strategic the process of strategic planning would be. For the first time, our work
(in religious life) has been a campus-wide conversation.” Warren Wilson’s interfaith strategic plan includes strategic priorities such as sustainable staffing, religious accommodations, and interfaith training. At the conclusion of the strategic planning process, the campus moved interfaith initiatives to the new Center for Identity, Dialogue, and Difference and Brian and his staff are shaping many of the now cross-campus dialogue across difference efforts. The goals articulated in the interfaith strategic plan have been incorporated into a campus three-year assessment plan and a subset of the Interfaith Strategic Planning Committee will continue to serve as advisors during the implementation period.

Application Deadline and Funding Timeline

Interfaith Strategic Planning Grant Applications will be available January 15, 2020. The application deadline is March 15, 2020. Grantees will be notified of their award in April 2020. Interfaith Strategic Planning Grant funds will go to support interfaith initiatives on campus from August 1, 2020- June 30, 2021.

Application Requirements

Applicants should submit the following materials to be considered for a grant:

1. A completed Campus Interfaith Inventory that maps your campus’ assets in each of the nine leadership practices. Request your institution’s unique Inventory link here, or contact Rob LeLaurin with questions, robert@ifyc.org.

2. A letter from the president of the institution, or a senior administrator, acknowledging support for the development and implementation of a campus-wide strategic plan for interfaith cooperation.

3. Membership roster of your Interfaith Strategic Planning Committee. The Interfaith Strategic Planning Committee should include approximately 10-15 staff and faculty stakeholders, including 1-2 senior administrators, from across campus representing areas such as student affairs, relevant academic departments (e.g., religious studies, sociology, leadership, political science) and relevant initiatives or centers (e.g., diversity officers, first-year programs, community engagement and service-learning). We also strongly encourage you to include 2-3 student leaders in relevant leadership positions (e.g., student government, heads of religious or secular organizations on campus, etc.). Please indicate two co-chairs of the committee; one staff or administrator and one faculty member preferred.
4. An online application where applicants can expect to enter demographic information, upload the documents listed above, and submit answers to the following questions (300 words max per question):

- Why do you want to create a campus-wide strategic plan for interfaith cooperation at your institution and why is now the time to do so?
- What are your campus’ biggest interfaith successes to date? What are your biggest challenges?
- What are the most meaningful insights gleaned from your IDEALS findings thus far? If relevant, please describe how you have shared these findings/insights with constituents in your community.
- How will this strategic planning process and final product align with existing strategic documents or processes on your campus (e.g., institutional mission or values, campus-wide strategic plan, existing funding streams)?
- How will you ensure the campus-wide strategic plan for interfaith cooperation that you design as a result of this grant is implemented?

5. Project budget.

**Reporting and Communication Process**

On or before June 30, 2020, grantees will submit an interfaith strategic plan as the culmination of the grant process. Grantee campuses will have the opportunity to connect with one another to share best practices, workshop challenges, and learn from one another’s experiences.

**Questions**

IFYC staff members are available for consultation and feedback during the development of your application. We welcome and encourage conversations about any part of the application process. Please contact Megan Johnson at megan@ifyc.org.