BUILDING PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY FOR INTERFAITH ENGAGEMENT
Request for Proposals

IFYC is offering a small set of grants in the amount of $4,000 to support campuses as they design initiatives to build professional capacity for interfaith engagement among faculty and staff.

The Building Professional Capacity Grant application is available here and the application deadline is May 15, 2017. Grants will be awarded in July 2017 and grant funds must be spent between August 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018.

Questions about the grants or the application process are welcome and may be addressed to Megan Lane, meganl@ifyc.org.

IFYC’s Vision for Interfaith Engagement on Campus

As religious diversity increases on college and university campuses and religion continues to play a prominent role in civic life, many institutions are seeking comprehensive, contextual and sustainable ways to foster interfaith cooperation on campus. In order to advance the achievement of such goals, IFYC has identified 9 Leadership Practices that are critical to developing a campus culture of religious pluralism. These practices collectively offer a framework through which campus stakeholders can attend to the multiple ways in which religious diversity can relate to campus life and transform campus culture.

1. **Institutional Identity and Mission**: Interfaith cooperation as a priority links directly to the campus’s mission and values, often emphasized through the institution’s religious or historical identity.

2. **Campus Wide Strategy**: Internal guiding document(s), e.g. strategic plan or campus-wide learning goals, guides the campus toward a vision and plan for interfaith cooperation across the curriculum and co-curriculum.

3. **Public Identity**: A campus’s public interfaith identity is affirmed through external communications, marketing materials, public relations, and other community events.

4. **Respect and Accommodation for Diverse Religious Identities**: Religious and nonreligious identity is respected and reasonably accommodated by institutional commitments, such as policies and procedures, inclusive meal options, and multi-purpose spaces, which are clearly publicized to the campus community.

5. **Academic Priority**: Scholars on campus from multiple disciplines see interfaith cooperation as a subject of academic research, analysis, and instruction.

6. **Staff and Faculty Competence and Capacity**: Staff and faculty understand interfaith issues and religious diversity among the student body, are competent and comfortable
organizing interfaith campus programs, and have institutional support through staff positions or development seminars dedicated to growing and sustaining their interfaith leadership.

7. **Student Leadership**: Campus structures that support interfaith student leadership contribute to effective student learning, encourage program sustainability, and ensure availability of various opportunities to students interested in interfaith leadership.

8. **Campus Community Partnership**: Interfaith engagement occurs beyond campus boundaries in the form of service-learning, internships, off-campus study, and experiential education opportunities that engage students in interfaith civic engagement.

9. **Assessment of Campus Climate and Interfaith Activities**: An institution engages in intentional assessment to determine key outcomes, identify effective practices, and determine the efficacy of interfaith initiatives; educators then use their findings to guide ongoing improvement and strategic planning.

Staff and faculty often report a lack of comfort and confidence engaging issues of religious diversity and interfaith engagement on campus. Yet, ensuring that staff and faculty are equipped with this knowledge and skillset is essential to create pluralist and inclusive campus environments (Leadership Practice 6). What types of knowledge, skills, and awareness are necessary in which parts of the institution to successfully promote a culture of religious pluralism? What are the best methods to ensure that faculty and staff have the appropriate education and learning opportunities to build confidence and competence engaging religious diversity on campus? In order to explore these questions and help campuses advance in their capacity building efforts, IFYC is offering a set of grants to support the development of initiatives that build professional capacity to engage religious diversity on campus.

**Project Guidelines**

Campuses will apply for grant funding to support the launch of an initiative that builds professional capacity to engage religious diversity on campus among a large subset of faculty and staff. We encourage campuses to propose initiatives that fit their campus context and align with their existing priorities (current strategic plans, divisional goals, etc.). To apply, campuses will first complete the Campus Interfaith Inventory, an online reflection tool designed to prompt campuses to think holistically about how they engage religious diversity on campus. The Campus Interfaith Inventory will launch publically by March 10, 2017. If you have not received your institution’s unique link by this date, please contact Megan Lane (meganl@ifyc.org) to receive it.

Campuses will ideally develop a collaborative team to move this project forward. We encourage campuses to submit plans that are creative and best utilize campus assets to advance interfaith cooperation.
In the selection process, IFYC will give preference to:
- proposals that deliberately target a wide audience of professionals for capacity building efforts
- proposals for creative ways to advance the Leadership Practice; particularly initiatives that could be adapted to other campus environments
- proposals that include a variety of key stakeholders from diverse areas across campus in the project development and implementation
- proposals that demonstrate achievable, innovative ways to increase long-term commitment to interfaith cooperation within the institution
- proposals that include concrete mechanisms to ensure sustainability beyond the grant term

Please note that grants are not intended to fund the following activities:
- Conference attendance or registration
- The cost of bringing an IFYC staff member to campus through IFYC’s Campus Engagement program
- Infrastructure or furniture costs

Budgets that include travel (for site visits to other institutions, for example) will be considered, though requests for travel should be thoughtfully tied to the explicit project proposed within the grant.

**Application Deadline and Funding Timeline**

The Building Professional Capacity grant application is available here. Applications are due on May 15, 2017; grantees will be notified of their award in July 2017. Staff and Faculty Capacity Grant funds will go to support interfaith initiatives on campus from August 1, 2017- June 30, 2018.

**Application Process**

- Interested campuses should start by convening relevant campus stakeholders to complete the Campus Interfaith Inventory (available via unique campus links by March 10, 2017; if you have not received your institution’s unique link by this date, please contact meganl@ifyc.org).
- Campuses should identify who will be involved in the planning and development process of this initiative and from whom institutional support might be necessary
- Campus stakeholders should then complete the online application available here and submit accompanying materials.

**Application Requirements**

Applicants should submit the following materials to be considered for a grant:
1. A completed Campus Interfaith Inventory via unique campus link.
2. A letter from a relevant senior administrator at the institution acknowledging support for the development of this initiative and its ongoing efforts into the future.
3. 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):
   - Who will be involved in leading this initiative and what expertise do they bring?
   - Who will be the intended target audience for this initiative?
   - How will you ensure wide participation from a cross-section of campus staff and faculty?
   - What are the key phases of this project? Along what timeline will they be implemented?
   - How does this initiative align with other institutional goals or strategies?
   - How will you determine what content and educational components are necessary within this initiative?
   - What assessment mechanisms will you use in evaluating success of this initiative?

4. Project budget.

**Reporting and Communication Process**

Grantees will submit mid-year and end-of-year reports detailing the progress of their strategic planning process. Grantee campuses will convene several times in academic year 2017-18 by phone to share best practices, workshop challenges, and learn from one another’s experiences. IFYC anticipates providing direct support to grantees through 1 on 1 coaching, peer learning facilitation among the grant cohort, and potential campus site visits as needed. We are eager to work alongside our campus partners in developing successful models for building staff and faculty capacity to engage interfaith cooperation on campus.

**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 Lane at meganl@ifyc.org.