

Coexistence International Networking Initiative ***Strengthening collaboration across fields***

Request for Proposal

OVERVIEW

Coexistence International at Brandeis University (CI) envisions a world where diversity is embraced for its positive potential, respect for persons is a core value, interdependence between different groups is recognized, equality is actively pursued, and the use of weapons to address conflicts is increasingly obsolete.

There are numerous individuals and organizations doing important coexistence work on the ground. CI occupies a unique niche: we focus on strengthening the capacity of these actors to do coexistence work. We believe that this focus can help achieve sustainable peace. We use the term coexistence to cover a range of disciplines, including conflict resolution, conflict management, conflict transformation, peacebuilding, and diversity work.

CI is inviting proposals, under a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process, for a project that **encourages a more collaborative approach to strengthening intergroup relations**. This can either be a project that seeks to strengthen collaborations within the coexistence field (between local, regional and international actors) OR a project that seeks to strengthen collaborations between the coexistence field and institutions and practitioners working in areas related to coexistence, such as human rights, development, democratization, cultural work, etc.

CI seeks to partner with local NGOs, international NGOs, or University-based programs already at work - within one area of a country or at the national level or in a particular geographic region - on strengthening intergroup relations. These organizations might situate themselves in the fields of coexistence, peacebuilding, human rights, development or gender, among others.

Expected outcomes of the regional program are likely to include the emergence of a new leadership cadre committed to a collaborative approach to coexistence, the integration of coexistence values to other areas of work, a new in-country coexistence network, and a series of publications.

CI will support one project that **encourages a more collaborative approach to strengthening intergroup relations**. We will consider applications from organizations based in the following countries:

- Peru
- El Salvador
- Mexico
- Brazil
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- Countries of West Africa

- India
- Australia/Oceania
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Countries in Europe facing issues of Muslim-non-Muslim relations and/or questions of immigrant and non-immigrant communities.
- United States

The organization must be one that seeks to improve the quality of intergroup relations, either through a direct focus on coexistence issues, or because of a focus on human rights, humanitarian assistance, development, gender, refugee resettlement, cultural work, or some other related field.

This RFP is for a one-time, eighteen-month initiative. Up to US\$35,000 is budgeted for this initiative, with disbursements tied to programmatic benchmarks. Funds can be used for a range of activities including networking activities, meetings, documentation and communications, among others.

Applications are due on October 31, 2006.

GOAL

The goal of this program is to strengthen the capacity of those actors and organizations carrying out coexistence and related work. CI believes that by providing resources to support greater cooperation and coordination among actors and organizations working at different levels (local, regional and international) and in different fields, coexistence efforts will be more effective and intergroup relations will be stronger.

The networking initiative should help those in the core of the coexistence field to see their work in relation to other areas of work (i.e. human rights, development, gender) and help those in related fields to see the connections between their work and coexistence efforts. It is expected that a leadership cadre of actors and organizations committed to sustaining complementary coexistence work in the country will develop through the course of this initiative. For more background on CI's focus on a complementary approach to coexistence work, visit CI's web site at: www.coexistence.net

ABOUT COEXISTENCE INTERNATIONAL

Coexistence International works to strengthen the effectiveness of policymakers, practitioners, researchers, advocates, organizations, and networks promoting coexistence, or capable of promoting coexistence, at local, national, and international levels; and to promote a complementary approach to coexistence through facilitating connections, learning, reflection, and strategic thinking between those in the coexistence field and those in related areas (e.g. sustainable development, human rights, democracy, the arts, etc.)

We have five program areas:

- (1) Strategic Networking: We convene cutting-edge discussions across the boundaries of the coexistence field and related areas.

- (2) Strengthening Coexistence Policy: We encourage the adoption of a coexistence lens in the development of all levels of policymaking.
- (3) Donor Engagement: We seek donor knowledge and support for a complementary approach to coexistence and generate resources for the field.
- (4) Strengthening the Contributions of Theatre to Peacebuilding: We provide opportunities for practitioners and scholars in the peacebuilding and theatre fields to learn from each other and reflect on and document their practice.
- (5) Regional Initiative: Working with a partner organization, CI will focus on strengthening the coexistence field in a particular, yet-to-be determined country or region.

For additional information on CI, please visit: www.coexistence.net

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CI is responsible for managing the competitive RFP process. Once a partner organization is selected, it is expected that a Coordinator within the organization will be identified to oversee the implementation of this initiative.

The partner organization is responsible for the design (with CI as a resource), implementation, and local oversight of a range of activities during the eighteen-month implementation period (see tentative list of activities below) as well as compliance with the specified reporting procedures.

In addition to the aforementioned financial support, CI will play a role in the design of an assessment mechanism for the initiative. There will be opportunities for the Coordinator to participate in CI gatherings outside the country, and for CI staff to participate in local meetings.

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

1. Engage in ongoing outreach, awareness raising, and conversations with representatives from organizations and institutions across a range of fields, including coexistence, development, human rights, immigration, other.
2. Convene networking meetings with actors from a range of fields.
3. Initiate collaborative coexistence projects.
4. Produce related tools and publications.
5. Produce documentation from the meetings; translate and/or adapt CI papers and reports that may be useful in the country.
6. Design and implement collaborative action research projects.
7. Follow up and maintain dialogue with meeting participants.
8. Produce material for CI website.
9. Submit financial and narrative reports, as defined in grant agreement.

TENTATIVE TIMELINE OF MAJOR BENCHMARKS

Application Phase

September 25, 2006: RFP circulated

October 31, 2006: Applications due. Confirmation of receipt will be sent to all applicants.

November 15, 2006: Applications reviewed by Review Committee¹. Finalists notified by email.

November - December: Follow-up conversations w/finalists.

December 15, 2006: Decision made and communicated.

Start-up phase

January - March 2007: Detailed work plan developed, initial conversation with possible partners, others.

March 15-16: Participation at international conference at Brandeis University, "Pieces of the Coexistence Puzzle: Democracy, Human Rights, Development and Gender".²

Implementation phase

April 2007 – March 2008

Final phase

April – June 2008: assessment, finalizing publications and wrap-up.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Who can Apply?

Local NGOs, international NGOs, or University-based programs from the following countries, or with ongoing locally led projects in the following countries, are invited to apply:

- Peru
- El Salvador
- Mexico
- Brazil
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- Countries of West Africa

¹ Review Committee includes: Mari Fitzduff, Chair of CI Advisory Board; Cynthia Cohen, Director of the Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence; Jessica Berns, CI Program Manager, External Reviewer (tbd)

² Costs covered by CI.

- India
- Australia/Oceania
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Countries in Europe facing issues of Muslim-non-Muslim relations and/or questions of immigrant and non-immigrant communities.
- United States

Criteria

- Organizations with already established local leadership in place
- Leadership capacity and positive contacts with other organizations and institutions in the country or region
- Strong familiarity with ongoing coexistence initiatives and work in related fields
- Evidence of capacity to sustain project after the life of the grant
- Understanding of, and commitment to, the strengthening of the coexistence field
- Evidence of organizational capacity to manage budgets and projects of this size

Application Procedures

There are no application forms, but all proposals should be in English and contain the following information. Each page of the application should contain a page number and the name of your organization.

1. **Cover sheet** (see attached): please fill out the attached cover sheet that serves as page 1 of your application.
2. **Executive summary**: a maximum 1-2 page summary explaining why this type of initiative is important in your country and your proposal for implementation.
3. **Information about the applicant organization**: brief history of the organization, its major achievements and the kinds of projects it has implemented to date. This section should provide us with an understanding of the organization's mission and broad strategy, and how it relates to the mission of Coexistence International. Please also include a list of your Board of Directors.
4. **Context**: relevant political and social background, a description of the major coexistence issues your country faces, the opportunities you see for this kind of work, as well as possible challenges and difficulties of the complementary approach in your country or region.
5. **Description of activities**: what are tentative activities that you envisage implementing? What are the critical questions you hope to address over the next eighteen months? Please include an overview or map of the existing organizations working on coexistence and related fields in your country. Also, what might a leadership cadre committed to an integrated approach to coexistence look like? How will it operate, what will it be poised to achieve?
6. **Expected outcomes**: please identify the specific expected outcomes of the project you will be implementing. Please include qualitative as well as quantitative indicators that will enable the organization to measure its success. What impact do you hope to achieve with this program and do you think that impact will be sustainable?

7. **Organizational capacity:** how do you propose to manage this workload? What is the size of your organization? List the names of any possible coordinator as well as others who might be involved in the project. What experience does the organization already have that prepares it to undertake this initiative?
8. **Reference:** please include the name of at least two references that can attest to the capacity, leadership, and caliber of your organization to carry out this work.
9. **Budget:** please include a budget of the estimated costs for the next 18 months.

Monitoring and Grantee Reporting Requirements

The grant monitoring process takes place throughout the grant period. The grant recipient must agree to provide detailed narrative and financial reports at intervals that will be specified in the grant agreement.

Please note that grant recipients must agree to repay any portion of the amount granted that is not used for the purposes of the grant.

Submission

All proposals must be received by **Tuesday, October 31** at midnight, U.S. Eastern Standard Time. Applications can be sent via email, fax or post.

By email to: coexistenceintl@brandeis.edu

By fax to: +1-781-736-5014

By post to:
Coexistence International at Brandeis University
Mailstop 086
Waltham, Massachusetts 02454
United States

Questions about the application process should be directed to Kristin Williams, Program Coordinator at coexistenceintl@brandeis.edu
Or by telephone: +1-781-736-5017

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COVER SHEET

Name of submitting organization:

Address:

Country:

Name and title of primary contact at organization:

Phone of contact:

Email of contact:

Fax of contact:

Mission statement of your local NGO/international NGO/University-based program: