

Building Interfaith America

IFYC CAMPUS INNOVATION GRANTS 2020-21

Request for Proposals

In a time when our country is experiencing cultural, political, and religious division, our nation needs interfaith leaders to break barriers and build bridges across difference. At Interfaith Youth Core, we envision interfaith leaders in all areas of campus life - as student club presidents, program coordinators in student life offices, faculty partnering with the Service-Learning office, and vice presidents supporting an interfaith strategic planning process. By bringing people together, interfaith leaders facilitate meaningful dialogue and action and bring positive change on their college campus and in their community.

IFYC is offering Campus Innovation Grants in the amount of \$2000 and \$4000 to support campuses as they implement sustainable initiatives to advance interfaith leadership.

In his book, *Out of Many Faiths*, IFYC's Founder and President Eboo Patel presents a new metaphor for our American culture. He sees America as a potluck nation, not a melting pot. In this metaphor, everyone is encouraged to bring their diverse dishes to the potluck so that all may feast. The potluck facilitates relationships between people by creating a space for a diverse group to eat, socialize, and enjoy surprising new connections. Ultimately, potlucks highlight the importance of the whole community, not their disparate parts. Everyone participating in a potluck benefits from a clean kitchen, enough dishes and cutlery, and a safe and open place to eat and socialize. When it comes to a potluck, these are the structures of the common good. Everyone ensures their upkeep through their contributions, cooking, cleaning, and conversing for the common good.

As we look to 2020-2021, we encourage campuses to create innovative interfaith programs in this spirit. We invite you to reflect: how can you welcome students from various religious and philosophical identities to express themselves in the classroom, in co-curricular activities, in the residence halls, and in their surrounding communities? In what ways can you challenge your campus community to bring their whole selves to a space and lean into religious pluralism? How can you equip staff, faculty, and administration to be leaders with an interfaith lens to address opportunities and challenges that arise on your campus?

Grant applications will be accepted January 15th, 2020, until the deadline on March 15th, 2020. All undergraduate-serving U.S. institutions of higher education are eligible to apply for a Campus Innovation Grant. IFYC is particularly interested in supporting these initiatives at HBCU and HSI campuses. Grants will be awarded in mid-April 2020. Grant funds must be

spent between August 1st, 2020 and June 30th, 2021. Please contact Katherine O'Brien at katherineo@ifyc.org with any questions pertaining to your grant submission or fill out the interest form on the webpage.

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

Diversity can cause division in a community that drives it toward conflict, or it can be engaged to build a spirit of respect and cooperation. IFYC believes that through respect for religious and worldview identities, mutually inspiring relationships, and common action for the common good, this diversity can be a source of strength and inspiration.¹

How a campus engages these three aspects of interfaith cooperation can vary. Based on over a decade of partnerships with colleges and universities 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.

Understanding that campuses start from different places and have different needs, grants will be available in four categories:

1. Starter Innovation Grants (\$2000)

- Past grant cycles have shown that campus innovation grants can serve as an effective catalyst to launch new initiatives and build buy-in, credibility, and prestige among key campus stakeholders for interfaith efforts. Therefore, grants of \$2000 will be made available for institutions that are in the early stages of advancing campus interfaith efforts. Grant activities should advance one of the [9 Leadership Practices for Interfaith Excellence in Higher Education](#). Examples can include, but are not limited to:
 - Creating a new interfaith student organization.
 - Piloting a new interfaith program (e.g. ongoing dinner/dialogue series).
 - Embedding interfaith content into existing programs (e.g. a program for RAs to use in residence halls or Orientation Leaders to include in Welcome Week).

2. Student Leadership Development Grants (\$4000)

- Grants of \$4000 will support campuses with an established history of interfaith programs in launching a new interfaith student leadership program

¹ For a more detailed definition, please see <https://www.ifyc.org/interfaith>.

or expanding an existing student leadership program. Grant activities should include an internal plan for facilitating participating students' leadership development and an external plan for how these students will execute their leadership skills within the broader campus and/or community. Examples can include, but are not limited to:

- Interfaith Fellows or Scholars programs.
- Interfaith Peer Ministry within residence halls.
- Interfaith Leadership certificate program.

3. Staff and Faculty Professional Development Grants (\$4000)

- Grants of \$4000 will support campuses with an established history of interfaith programs in launching initiatives to build capacity and competence in campus staff, faculty, and paraprofessionals to address and engage religious diversity. Examples can include, but are not limited to:
 - A religious literacy seminar series with book reading and discussion.
 - A campus-wide professional development day with follow-up workshops.
 - A series of trainings for faculty from diverse disciplines to incorporate interfaith leadership content into coursework.
- IFYC has developed multiple resources, including the [BRIDGE](#) and [blended learning](#) curricula to assist campuses in this area. IFYC highly recommends using these resources as a starting point for training.

4. Creative Project Grants (\$4000)

- Recognizing that not all impactful projects will fit into the previous three categories, additional grants of \$4000 will support creative projects that advance interfaith cooperation as a campus-wide priority and/or within a specific new area of campus life. Projects should fall within the spirit of the [9 Leadership Practices for Interfaith Excellence in Higher Education](#), but think outside of the box. Be imaginative in scope but grounded in methodology and focus on one or two leadership practices.
- Past projects that fall into this area include but are not limited to:
 - Benedictine University's engagement of over 300 students in 25 general education courses in writing reflections based on hospitality in the Rule of St. Benedict. A selection of them were bound and distributed to the entire incoming first-year class.
 - Butler University's use of campus climate data and social media campaigns to increase interfaith awareness.
 - Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's application of interfaith leadership skills to gaming culture.

- Grant projects should include tangible outcomes, and not solely be planning processes or “think tank” projects.
- We highly encourage interested campuses to contact Brian Anderson (brian@ifyc.org) to further develop their ideas.

Project Guidelines

Applicants are required to complete the [Campus Interfaith Inventory](#) to reflect on where they have existing assets for interfaith cooperation on campus and where there are areas for growth. We encourage proposals that creatively leverage existing assets to address real needs and advance interfaith cooperation into new areas of campus.

In the selection process, IFYC will give preference to campuses that:

- propose innovative ways to expand campus interfaith work within the unique campus context.
- involve a variety of stakeholders from diverse areas across campus in their interfaith efforts, including both campus professionals and student leaders.
- demonstrate desire and ability to increase campus-wide commitment to interfaith cooperation.
- propose projects that are focused and achievable within one academic year.
- have proposals that include concrete mechanisms to ensure sustainability and impact beyond the grant term.
- have a clear plan for assessing the outcomes of their project.

Here are a few questions to consider in order to develop a project with a clear focus that can be realistically implemented in one academic year:

- What is the primary objective of this project?
- How complex are the logistics for this project?
- Is there existing content (from IFYC or otherwise) that can be used, instead of designing something from scratch? (i.e. IFYC BRIDGE curriculum)
- If an off-campus partnership is involved, how much time and effort would be required to lay the groundwork for that to succeed?
- Who has the capacity to take the lead on this project, and how much time can they (and others) devote to it?

Grant funds should be used for project expenses, which can include but are not limited to the following:

- Program supplies (food, books, printing costs, room rentals, speaker fees, etc.).
- Travel expenses if your project includes site visits within your community or to other institutions.

- Stipends (e.g. for student interns, interfaith fellows, or staff/faculty project leads).

Funds should not be used for the following:

- Indirect or overhead costs. The entirety of the grant funds should go directly to project expenses.
- Costs associated with bringing IFYC staff to campus.
- Furniture or equipment as a standalone project, unless these are incorporated into a larger programmatic strategy.

Application Deadline and Funding Timeline

Applications will be available in January 15th, 2020. Applications are due on March 15th, 2020. Grantees will be notified of their award in mid-April 2020. Innovation Grant funds will go to support interfaith initiatives on campus from August 1st, 2020 – June 30th, 2021.

Application Requirements

Applicants should submit the following materials to be considered for an IFYC Campus Innovation Grant:

1. The [Campus Interfaith Inventory](#), in order to map your campus's 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. An online application where applicants can expect to enter demographic information, an abstract of their proposed interfaith initiative, a description of the proposed outcomes and narrative detail of their proposal, a project timeline and budget.

Reporting and Communication Process

Grantees will submit mid-year (December 2020) and end-of-year (May 2021) reports detailing the progress and impact of their initiatives.

Support and Training

Grantees will have the opportunity to convene virtually to share best practices, workshop challenges, and learn from one another's experiences. Grantees will also have access to coaching and support from IFYC staff to assist in their grant implementation.

Grantees will be able to convene in person at the annual August [Interfaith Leadership Institute](#) in Chicago. Receive an early interest notification by signing up [here](#) before registration opens on March 5th.

IFYC can also support grantees through the [IFYC Alumni Speakers Bureau](#), a nationwide network of diverse religious and nonreligious young leaders who have completed intensive interfaith leadership training and are excited to spread the message of interfaith cooperation far and wide. Alumni are available to speak at events, such as panel discussions, conferences, fundraisers, book clubs, assemblies, and more.

Questions

IFYC staff members are available for consultation and feedback during the development of your application. Please contact Katherine O'Brien at katherineo@ifyc.org with any questions pertaining to your grant submission.