



# Vote is Sacred Campus Pilot Grants Request for Proposals

## Introduction/Program Rationale

The courage of the late John Lewis amid brutal repression will stand as a monument to one of the country's most significant efforts to save this democratic experiment we call the United States of America. As an original architect of the twentieth-century's civil rights movement and during his 17 terms in Congress, Rep. Lewis worked tirelessly to ensure access to the ballot box for all people, particularly Black people, and others for whom the burden of voter suppression weighs most heavily.

At Interfaith America, we share this belief and commitment. Indeed, Interfaith America's vision for an interfaith America only exists in the context of a country where everyone has the opportunity to speak and be heard. Vote is Sacred will activate the social capital of higher education and faith communities to underscore the centrality of the vote in a religiously diverse, participatory government. We will leverage our robust network of interfaith leaders to mobilize hundreds of students and community members around voter and issue education, voter registration, and voter engagement.

## Project Opportunity

Vote is Sacred is fashioned after Interfaith America's innovative programs that engage faith commitments to address religious and racial divides. We will implement a tested model convening experts and emerging leaders. Combining training, storytelling, collaboration, and action, participants will put theory into practice. As a result, Vote is Sacred will launch a national conversation about how civic engagement—especially voting—is rooted in faith convictions. Moreover, this timely initiative will equip citizens with practical steps to secure the right to vote for all Americans.

Through Vote is Sacred, Interfaith America will mobilize our higher education partners to promote civic engagement in states where the erosion of voting rights is most egregious. Interfaith America will offer grants to educators on college and university

campuses to support curricular, co-curricular, and/or community projects advancing the right to vote. Combining training, storytelling, collaboration, and action, participants will put theory into practice. Campus grantees will assemble student teams and/or involve community partners to execute projects.

Projects will create space for conversations about civic duty and faith traditions, multiple perspectives on a social issue impacted by ballot measures, or reliable information on how to vote. Other activities may alleviate challenges to voting, such as transportation or language



barriers. Participants will conduct projects on campus, in the community, in virtual spaces, and in their social networks, workplaces, and houses of worship.

### Project Timeline

Grants will be awarded on an ongoing basis for work to be done beginning in the Fall of 2022. We will begin accepting applications through June 30, 2022. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until June 30, 2022.

- **June 30, 2022:** Application period closes
- **July 18, 2022:** Grantees will be notified of their selection.
- **August 12-14:** Grantees participate in Civic Engagement Track at Interfaith Leadership Summit
- **August 15, 2022:** Grantees can begin recruiting, training, and implementing their campus projects
- **December 16, 2022:** Grantees will submit a status report on their projects
- **March 17, 2023:** Grantees will submit a final report on their projects
- **April 2023:** Grantees will participate in a virtual focus group, which will include an assessment of program impact.

### Application

All applicants must complete an online application by June 30, 2022, which asks for the following information:

- A description of your Vote is Sacred project idea and how it amplifies interfaith bridge building and civic engagement
- The intended audience for your project
- Anticipated challenges of doing this work on your campus
- What success will look like in your context
- Name and description of each Team member's role (faculty, staff, and/or student leaders).

The application can be accessed here: <https://interfaithamerica.tfaforms.net/4980698>.

### *Use of Grant Funds*

Co-Curricular grants are \$5,000 with up to \$2,000 eligible as a stipend to a student, staff member, or community partner. Grant awards are meant to support grantees for the time and energy it takes to teach Vote is Sacred curriculum and lead programmatic initiatives. Grantees will be able to use these funds for convenings, marketing materials, organizing and mobilization efforts, and staffing and technological support.

### *Grant Terms and Requirements*

If accepted, grantees will be asked to submit a headshot, information about their campus and a description about their project for their grant acceptance. Grantees will be encouraged to attend



the Interfaith Leadership Summit to participate in the Civic Engagement Track, connect with other grantees, Vote is Sacred Thought Leaders, and Interfaith America staff.

Interfaith America requires grantees to submit a project status reports periodically throughout the course of the project and a Final Report at the conclusion of the grant. These reports will include information on all project activities, data on the total number of individuals that were engaged throughout the project, and a budget showing how funds were spent.

### *Distribution of Grant Funds*

Interfaith America will disperse grant funds in one lump sum. A check will be sent after grantee signs and returns:

- The Memorandum of Agreement
- Submits the institution's W-9 to Interfaith America

### Resources for Vote is Sacred Programming

Questions and Support

Questions about the grant or application process should be addressed to Tyrone McGowan, Program Manager, at [tmcgowan@interfaithamerica.org](mailto:tmcgowan@interfaithamerica.org).

### Project Examples

Campus projects will vary in nature and scope. Here are some examples the types of curricular, co-curricular, and/ or community projects grantees might propose. Examples include but are not limited to:

- A core group of student leaders hosts a discussion series about how to think about particular social or political issues from a faith perspective. For example, the group of Vote is Sacred student leaders could meet with the campus Muslim Student Organization to host a dialogue about what Islam says about the importance of civic participation. At the end of this conversation, there could be a call to action by having attendees register to vote and/or verify their registration is correct. This model can also be replicated to have meaningful dialogue with external organizations and groups to foster and strengthen relationships in the broader community.
- Throughout the semester, student led Vote is Sacred teams can use funds to develop and promote high quality public campus programs. They could convene an array of diverse public intellectuals, social media influencers, community activists, civic and religious leaders to have in-person public events or webinars around voting and civic engagement.
- Student leaders could host voter registration drives on campus. Funds could be used to support the necessary costs to administer a series of voter registration drives that target various demographics and groups on campus. Funds could also help support actual



GOTV efforts during an election season. For example, paying for shuttles to transport students and other community members to the nearest polling place to cast their vote.

### **Interfaith America Media Release Statement**

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