



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Inspiring Campus Change: Data-Driven Interfaith Grants

“Pluralism looks to build bridges where others seek to widen divides.” – Eboo Patel

The Inspiring Campus Change Grant provides opportunities for institutions of higher education to promote religious pluralism and to create welcoming environments for people of diverse religious, secular, and spiritual identities. The goal is to help campuses engage constructively with people of diverse religious backgrounds and divergent ideologies, and to model what it means to live and thrive in a diverse democracy.

Grant Overview

Interfaith America seeks partnerships with campuses who recognize that American colleges and universities have a unique role and responsibility to strengthen American pluralism, creating spaces and opportunities for people to gather purposefully and engage cooperatively across difference. With the Inspiring Campus Change Grants, colleges and universities will develop more comprehensive interfaith infrastructures, practices, and strategies to enable administrators, faculty, staff, and students engage across lines of religious differences and contribute to a sustainable and thriving democracy.

Informing the work of grantees will be the Interfaith, Spiritual, Religious, and Secular Campus Climate Index, or INSPIRES Index. Drawing on findings from IDEALS research, the Index measures and evaluates an institution’s efforts to create a welcoming climate for people who orient around religion differently. Grant recipients will use data from the Index to develop context-specific projects that will enhance their institutions’ efforts to promote religious pluralism and interfaith learning. These projects will need to address at least two of the following seven dimensions included in the INSPIRES Index:

1. Religious accommodations: The availability and accessibility of academic and residential/dietary accommodations.
2. Institutional behaviors: Institutional actions to support religious, secular, and spiritual inclusion, including the collection of demographic data and assessment, training, and the role of councils and committees.
3. Efforts to reduce negative engagement: Policies and response protocols that address religious insensitivity on campus and communicate institutional values.



4. Extra-curricular engagement: Opportunities for interfaith encounters, dialogue, programming, service, and reflection.
5. Space for support and expression: Multifaith and dedicated spaces and communities for support and expression, both on and off campus.
6. Structural diversity: Representation of people with different religious, secular, and spiritual identities within the university.
7. Academic engagement: Curriculum, classroom practices, and faculty behaviors that engage religious, secular, and spiritual diversity.

Grant Details

Required

- The institution has completed or updated their INSPIRES Index survey in the past six months.
- Submission of the institution's draft INSPIRES Index report.
- One or more proposed projects that will enhance the institution's efforts to promote religious pluralism and interfaith learning based on results from the INSPIRES Index, with attention to at least two of the seven dimensions included in the Index.
- A draft timeline for developing and implementing the project(s).
- A draft budget for how grant funding will be used in relation to the project(s).
- A letter of endorsement from a senior administrator on campus.
- A team of three or more to oversee and implement the grant on campus.

Funding

- Grantees will receive **\$10,000** in funding to support the development and implementation of their proposed project(s).
- Funding will generally be disbursed in two installments:
 - \$5,000 within thirty days of the execution of the MOA, and
 - \$5,000 within thirty days of submitting the December report.
 - Grantees whose projects require a larger percentage of the funding before December can request a larger first disbursement before signing the MOA.
- Funding can be used to develop and support curricula, policies, processes, programs, and spaces that cultivate interfaith hospitality and promote religious pluralism on campus. A portion of the funding can also be used to compensate those who lead specific projects pertaining to the proposed project(s).

Restrictions

- Grant funds may not be spent on:
 - Alcohol
 - Overhead, indirect, or administrative expenses (includes but is not limited to endowments, capital campaigns, annual funds, tuition, or student fees)
 - Furniture or equipment, unless they are part of a larger programmatic strategy
 - Expenses associated with bringing IA staff to campus
 - Expenses associated with political campaign activities, including directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office; making contributions to political campaigns; or attempting to influence legislation (i.e., lobbying)
- Institutions that previously received an Advancing Religious Pluralism Grant from Interfaith America are ineligible for an Inspiring Campus Change Grant.

Deliverables

- Virtual participation in professional learning and development opportunities to share learnings and address challenges. Exact dates will be determined after grantees are selected.
- Submission of two surveys that ask questions about the following:
 - Project reports
 - Details of expenditures
 - Assessment findings measuring the success and impact of the project(s)
 - Surveys will be due December 13, 2024, and May 1, 2025
- One team member's participation in an in-person, half-day session for grantees on Friday, August 2, 2024; followed by participation in the Interfaith Summit, August 2-4, 2024 (both in Chicago, IL)
 - Summit registration and two nights' lodging will be covered for one team member
 - Up to \$500 of grant funds may be used to support travel expenses

Program Timeline

- December 15, 2023: Deadline to submit campus data to the INSPIRES Index
- February 16, 2024: The application period is open.
- Late February/Early March: Campuses receive drafts of their INSPIRES reports.
- April 4, 2024: The application period closes.
- April 17, 2024: Grantees will be notified of their selection.
- August 1, 2024 – April 15, 2025: Grant implementation period.
- May 1, 2025: Deadline for final reports.



For further information, please contact Bex Blackburn, Program Operations Manager, at bblackburn@interfaithamerica.org.

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