ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

Youth Solidarity Fund
2009 Application Guidelines

Background

In 2008, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Secretariat established the Youth Solidarity Fund to support youth-led projects addressing areas of primary concern to the UNAoC, i.e. fostering mutual respect, understanding and long-term positive relationships between peoples of different cultures and religions. The establishment of the Youth Solidarity Fund attempts to answer the calls to action from youth organizations and networks made around the world during 2006 and 2007 related to UNAoC thematic areas.

A wealth of ideas and ongoing work can be replicated and expanded to reach more youth and have a broader impact with the help of seed funding. The demand and need for funding in the youth sector to carry out such work is extensive. The UNAoC will not be able to meet all of this demand by itself. However, the Youth Solidarity Fund aims to meet some of it and the UNAoC will ensure that the funding it provides offers opportunities for outstanding youth projects to be implemented, replicated or expanded.

Overview of the UNAoC Youth Solidarity Fund

The UNAoC Youth Solidarity Fund awards grants to outstanding project proposals that demonstrate innovative youth approaches to intercultural or interfaith dialogue. The Youth Solidarity Fund will only support projects that are entirely developed and managed by youth for the benefit of youth. The age definition used by the UNAoC to characterize youth is a person who is between 18 years old and their early 30s.

Subject to availability of funds, the 2009 edition of the Youth Solidarity Fund offers a total envelope of up to US$300,000. There are two levels of funding available:
- **Small grants:** Community or local-level projects needing funding of up to US$20,000.
- **Large grants:** National or regional-level projects needing funding of up to US$30,000.

The evaluation of eligible project proposals will be conducted by a Youth Selection Committee composed of youth representatives nominated by key youth partners. Using selection criteria developed by the UNAoC, the Youth Selection Committee will identify projects that are deemed to be the most meritorious under each category of funding.

One person per youth organization with a winning project will be invited to Budapest (Hungary) to receive training offered by the Council of Europe. This training will focus on both project management and cross-cultural understanding.

Each winning organization will sign a Memorandum of Agreement with the UNAoC in order to govern the management of the grant and the implementation of the project supported by the Youth Solidarity Fund. Throughout the implementation of the Youth Solidarity Fund projects, the UNAoC will support winning youth organizations with advice, networking opportunities, sharing of resources, promotion of project achievements, media relations, etc.

Detailed mid-term and final reports (both narrative and financial with supporting documentation) will be required of youth organizations with projects supported by the Youth Solidarity Fund.

One representative per organization with successful and completed Youth Solidarity Fund project may be invited to the Third Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations taking place in Rio (Brazil) at the end of May 2010 (to be confirmed).

Eligibility Criteria for Youth Organizations

Youth organizations are subject to the same criteria as other partners of the United Nations system in that they must be accountable and transparent and refrain from all discriminatory practices. The following general eligibility criteria apply to all youth organizations seeking funding under the Youth Solidarity Fund. Applying organizations need to fulfill each and every one of the following criteria to be deemed eligible:
- Be a membership-based youth organization (youth-led or primarily youth-serving) or a network composed of several youth-led organizations;
- Be a non-governmental organization (with the exception of national youth councils) registered in the country of operation as a charity, trust, foundation or association;
- Be operational for a minimum of 2 years with funding base and project implementation;
- Have a democratic governance structure, leadership nomination and consultative processes in formulating priorities and policies with members;
- Have the ability to demonstrate proper and consistent monitoring, evaluation and recordkeeping of their activities, including projects evaluation reports and financial accounts;
- Have a gender perspective/balance reflected in their staff, membership and activities;
- Have no adherence to or affiliations with violent ideologies or antagonism against any particular country, culture, religion or belief system, ethnic group, sex, etc.; and
- Did not receive funding under the Pilot Phase of the Youth Solidarity Fund as a youth organization can receive funding under the Youth Solidarity Fund only once.

Upon request, organizations need to provide documentary evidence of how they fulfill all of these criteria.

Eligibility Criteria for Projects

All submitted projects need to fulfill each and every one of the following criteria to be deemed eligible:

- **Objectives:** The project clearly supports the objectives of the UNAoC, i.e. improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and religions, and to help counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism;
- **Activities:** The project includes activities focused on building positive and long-term collaborative relationships between youth of different cultural and religious backgrounds;
- **Origin:** The project was developed by youth and the proposal was drafted by youth;
- **Target Audience:** The project targets youth. A gender balance among project participants is ensured;
- **Management:** The project will be managed by a youth organization responding to the eligibility criteria mentioned above;
- **Project Coordinator:** The Project Coordinator is from the applying organization and is a youth;
- **Duration and Timing:** The project must be implemented within a maximum of six months, starting in mid-November 2009 at the earliest and ending mid-May 2010 at the latest;
- **Location:** The project will take place in country(ies) offering a reasonable level of safety and security to participating youth; and
- **Budget:** The organization needs to guarantee their capacity to implement all elements of the proposed project with the funds requested.

Upon request, organizations need to provide documentary evidence of how their projects fulfill all of these criteria.

Timeline

Below is the planned timeline for the 2009 edition of the Youth Solidarity Fund:
- Application deadline: September 30, 2009
- Selection process: October 1 to 14, 2009
- Announcement of selection process results: Mid-October, 2009
- Signature of Memorandum of Agreements: Mid-October to early November, 2009
- Preparation for training in Budapest: Mid-October to early November, 2009
- Training in Budapest: November 8 to 15, 2009
- First disbursements and inception of projects: Beginning in mid-November 2009 (provided that Memorandum of Agreements are signed)
- Mid-term reports deadline (narrative and financial): January 30, 2010
- Second disbursements: Beginning on February 1, 2010 (provided that mid-term reports are submitted and approved)
- Completion of projects: Mid-May 2010
- Sharing of project results during the UNAoC Rio Forum (to be confirmed): End of May 2010
- Final reports deadline (narrative and financial): June 30, 2010

Application Form Fields Explained

These explanatory notes are intended to clarify what information is requested on the application form for the 2009 edition of the Youth Solidarity Fund.

1. Your organization
- Please provide information about your organization as indicated.
- If your project is a partnership between two or more organizations, please agree on which organization applies for the funds and submit only one application for the entire project. Note that it is the applying organization that has primary responsibility for signing the Memorandum of Agreement with the UNAoC on behalf of all partners, submitting narrative and financial reports as well as liaising with the UNAoC Secretariat on various matters. Information about your partners should be included in Section 12 (see below).

2. Project Coordinator Contact Information
- Complete all sections and verify that the information is accurate.

3. Project Overview
- *Project Name*: Indicate the name of your project. We suggest picking an imaginative project name and limiting it to 5 or 6 words as this will help during the promotional phase.
- *Timeframe*: Indicate the planned start date and the planned end date. The period during which the funds are used can not be longer than 6 months, starting mid-November 2009.
- *Location*: City(ies) and country(ies) of activities: Indicate all the cities and countries in which project activities will take place.
- *Category of Grant*: Indicate whether you are seeking a small grant for local or community initiatives (up to US$20,000) or a large grant for national or regional initiatives (up to US$30,000). Please note that you can only submit your project under one category of grant.
- *Total Amount Requested*: Indicate the full amount of money you are applying for in US$. Please also indicate the exchange rate used. You can use www.onada.com to get the exact exchange rate.

4. Project Objective(s)
- State the objective(s) of your project. *What* do you want to achieve with this project?
- Try formulating your objectives using the SMART criteria (S = Specific, M = Measurable, A = Accountable, R = Realistic, T = Time bound).

5. Analysis of the Problem(s) or Issue(s)
- Describe the problem(s) or issue(s) your project addresses. *Why* is this project necessary?
- Please be as specific as possible about the links between your project's objectives and the problems or issues at hand.

6. Project Activities
- Describe all the activities that you will implement to address the stated problem(s)/issue(s) and reach your project's objective(s).

- *How* will these activities help you reach your project objective(s)?
- Include information such as the nature, timing, duration, target audience, number of participants, etc. for each activity.

7. Target audience
- *Who* are you targeting in your activities?
- How will you select participants to the activities?
- How will you ensure *gender balance* among project participants?
- What is the total number of young people you are planning to reach during the life of your project?

8. Sustainability
- State how you are planning to *maintain the results* of your project after its completion. How will we see the impact of your project after it is completed?
- What strategy or approach will you use to ensure that the impact lives long after the end of your project?

9. Match with UNAoC Priorities
- Indicate how your project contributes to the *UNAoC priorities*? Please refer to the UNAoC website (www.unaoc.org) for a general overview.
- What is the *value added* of your project?
- Why should it receive *funding* under the Youth Solidarity Fund?

10. Outreach to Marginalized Youth
- State if your project will reach out to *marginalized or other youth* who would otherwise not be connected to the activities you are planning?
- How will you reach these marginalized youth?

11. Monitoring & Evaluation of Impact
- What type of *monitoring* will you conduct during the course of the project to ensure you are reaching your objectives while the project is going on?
- How will you *evaluate* your project upon completion?
- Please elaborate on the method(s) you will use and how you will provide documentation on your *results and impact*.

12. Partner(s)
- List your partner's (if any) name and contact details.
- Elaborate on their role and any sharing of funds received under the Youth Solidarity Fund.

13. Budget
- The budget needs to be clear, precise and realistic.
- Please list your main categories of expenditures for the successful implementation of this project. For each category of expenditure, please list the total. See the example below.

- For project budget submission, please use the US$ currency. Please ensure that you use the same exchange rate as the one stated in section 3.
- Typical acceptable budget items include travel, visa fees, room and board, education materials, trainers/training, venue rental and translation or interpretation services.
- Please note that proposals should never allocate more than 30% of the budget for salaries.
- A maximum of 5% of the total grant can be dedicated to audio visual and IT equipment.
- The budget cannot include amounts for fundraising activities or promotion of the organization (as opposed to the issue at hand).
- The budget also needs to include the cost of one visa and one return ticket to Budapest (Hungary) in order to attend the training offered by the Council of Europe. The room and board for one person per organization will be covered during the training.
- When reviewing budgets, we take into consideration local prices in the country where the applying organization operates.
- Please note that if your project is selected, we will closely review the budget with you to ensure proper allocation of funds.

EXAMPLE of budget for small grant of up to US$20,000 (submission phase)	
Travel expenses for 30 trainees (visa, train, room, meals for 5 days).	$10,000
Training sessions (room rental, salary of trainers, interpretation)	$2,500
Production of educational material (translation and printing)	$2,000
Local transportation costs for meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs to discuss policy recommendations developed during training sessions	$200
Production of DVD with video of meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs as a good practice model (video production, copying of DVD, distribution to partners)	$500
Administrative expenses (office supplies and long distance calls)	$100
Travel and visa to Budapest for Council of Europe training	$1,200
Total Amount Requested	**$ 16,500**

14. Executive Summary
Please answer the following questions in one or two sentences each.
- What you want to achieve with this project (project objectives)?
- Why is this project necessary (problem addressed)?
- How will you reach these objectives (project activities)?
- Who are you targeting (type of youth and number)?
- How will you ensure sustainability of results?
- How does you project support the UNAoC objectives? What is your project value added and why should it receive funding?
- Will marginalized youth be involved in your project? How?
- How will you monitor and evaluate your project as well as document its impact?

Checklist:

Before submitting your application, please verify that you have:
- Completed your application form in *English* as this is the only language common to all members of the Youth Selection Committee. Obviously, your project can take place in the language of your choice;
- Completed *all sections* on the application form. The UNAoC will not follow-up with applicants to obtain missing details. Incomplete applications will not be processed;
- Used a size *11 or 12 font* when completing your application form. Applications using a smaller font size will not be processed;
- Limited your application to a *total of 8 pages*. A maximum of 8 pages per application will be forwarded to the Youth Advisory Committee; and
- Saved your application in *Word or Rich Text format*. Applications sent in any other format will not be processed.

Questions:

All questions need to be submitted via email to Isabelle Legare, Youth Program Manager, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations at isabellel@unops.org.

Submitting Your Application:

Please email your completed application form by **1PM, NEW YORK TIME, ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2009** to the UNAoC Secretariat at isabellel@unops.org. Applications received after this time and date will not be processed. Within 24 hours of submitting your application, you will receive an email confirming its receipt. If you do not hear from the UNAoC within 24 hours after submitting your application, please call 1 917 367 4192. The receipt e-mail does not mean that your application was deemed eligible. All applicants will be notified in mid-October 2009.