

ROTARY PEACE PROJECT INCUBATOR: CULTURAL RESOURCES FOR PEACE

You are invited to a series of four collaborative working sessions online to design projects in the area of cultural resources for peace.

Recommended Audience: These workshops are for Rotarians, Rotaract members, Rotary Peace Fellows, peace practitioners, representatives of peacebuilding, cultural and human rights organisations. The workshops provide time, space and a virtual context to work collaboratively with important actors in developing community-needed projects in South Asia (Bangladesh), Europe (Poland) and the Middle East (Iraq). All sessions will be conducted using an interactive approach including breakout sessions and joint discussions.

The workshops will be supported by Rotary Peace Fellows, Natalia Sineaeva-Pankowska and Dr Matthew Johnsen, as well as Dr Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala, the director of the Makerere University Rotary Peace Center in Kampala, Uganda.

They, together with other members of the planning team – all with experience in program design and implementation - will guide the Rotary community through the culture for peace process, exploring new ideas and visions that celebrate culture as an agent of positive peace.

Session 1: Best practice: Using cultural resources to build peace

Date: 03/09/2020

Time: 16:00-18:00 CET (Geneva)

The first session will introduce participants to how various cultural resources can be used as a toolkit for peacebuilding efforts and conflict resolution activities. The session will introduce different types of arts as peacebuilding tools. It will include examples of effective practice of how cultural resources can be used to promote peace and the potential for transformational impact. Participants will discover: the impact or changes that projects achieved in the short or long-term; the challenges and strategies concerning successful communications about the project, and the main outcomes and the risks for the projects.

The session will discuss the examples of good practices:

- Dr Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala, the director for the Makerere University Rotary Peace Center in Kampala, Uganda, “A Critical Reflection on Cultural Approaches to Reconciliation: The case of Northern Uganda”.
- Maestro Karim Wasfi and his unique holistic approach since 2007 towards sustained peace, capacity building, cognition and empowerment, through societal engagement and transformative community outreach. Peace initiatives through education, music and sound for healing and cross-cultural integration, deradicalisation, prevention of tension, and counterterrorism. The project Peace Through Art supported and empowered refugees and internally displaced Iraqi women. The project also aimed to re-build connections among Iraqi citizens to resist violence. Through education, training, workshops, joint performances, the project promoted self-confidence, civilisation, combatted the causes of terrorism, radicalisation, and promoted a wide range of long-term outcomes- particularly for women and youth beyond creed, gender, color or political notions.

- Educational campaigns in the field of popular culture, 'Music Against Racism' and 'Let's Kick Racism Out of Stadiums' by the NEVER AGAIN Association. The campaigns run by the NEVER AGAIN Association since the mid-1990s have used the tools of informal education in the promotion of respect for diversity. For example, the association has organized a football (soccer) tournament, workshops and discussions about the topics of peace, diversity and tolerance at the annual 'Polish Woodstock' festival held near the Polish-German border, Europe's biggest music festival. The free festival brings together around 500,000 participants every year (Prof. Rafal Pankowski, Collegium Civitas, co-founder of the NEVER AGAIN Association).
- Dharmarajika school (Dhaka), which is the unique primary/secondary/high school which provides education and brings together a mixed group of students of Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu and Christian background, through creative activities and sport, expanding its activities also in Chittagong, in a region threatened by communal strife and conflict (Lablu Barua, PhD candidate in Peace Studies at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University and a mindfulness meditation expert).
- A folk music project in Bangladesh. This was initiated and implemented by the Norwegian writer, researcher and photographer Wera Saether, who has established a 'Gurugriha' indigenous school for the children from poor income groups, so that they can discover music and yoga (Stian F. Kristensen, a Norwegian musician and the coordinator of two Deichman libraries in Oslo).

Participants will also learn and explore a multidimensional cultural approach combining various types of arts incorporating the objective of sustainability which can be beneficial for peacebuilding and conflict resolution projects.

Purpose: This workshop introduces delegates to the different approaches that use cultural resources as a tool for peace-building and conflict resolution, while also learning good practices, and discovering the ensuing impact and positive changes. By the end of the workshop, participants should be able to understand the approach and tools which will be applied during the design and the implementation of the projects.

Session 2: Translating Effective Cultural Change Approaches to Other Societal Contexts

Date: 17/09/2019

Time: 16:00-18:00 CET (Geneva)

This session is designed to stimulate thinking on how to apply various cultural approaches to the projects planned in different historical, cultural, social and geographical contexts. For example, the relevance of Maestro Karim Wasfi's unique approach to spreading the message of peace through music and sound for refugee and migrant communities in Europe or Asia. Another example is the Rock against Racism campaign which was created to tackle growing racism in Britain which inspired the NEVER AGAIN Association. This initiated Music against Racism in Poland several years later, and it continues to have relevance today. What can be the potential benefits and synergies of such transfers in good practices, experiences and inspirations (as well as risks) for 'transferring' these approaches/ideas to other contexts, e.g. Bangladesh, Poland, Iraq?

We will introduce the concept of a project or program logic model and its use in conceptualizing, implementing and evaluating cultural resources for peace initiatives.

Our objective is to prepare participants to design the projects. By the end of the workshop participants should be able to understand - and more clearly discuss - the context for the projects they will design during subsequent seminars.

Sessions 3 and 4: Designing the projects for Iraq, Bangladesh and Poland

Date: 24/09/2020, Iraq and Poland

01/10/2020, Bangladesh

Time: 16:00-18:00 CET (Geneva)

Over the course of the final two sessions, participants will work on concrete project proposals for Iraq, Bangladesh and Poland, proposed to them by the coordination team. The participants will develop project Logic Models as a tool for planning, managing and monitoring projects. The tool is useful for analysis of an existing situation, including the identification of stakeholders' needs, objectives, and activities that need to be implemented in order to achieve objectives. It will help to measure output, including understanding the external factors that are critical to the success of the project, potential risks and the objectives. The participants will work in smaller groups under the guidance of experts and share the results during joint discussions.

Purpose: to collaboratively develop community-needed project proposals by a group of Peace Fellows, Rotarians, Rotaractors and experts.

By the conclusions of the final workshop sessions, participants will make presentations concerning five developed project proposals which they will later further develop as proposals to the Rotary Foundation, and other funders.

The outcomes of these workshops will be:

- Five elaborated project proposals to be implemented in Iraq, Bangladesh and Poland by Rotary clubs. The final project proposals will be presented by coordination teams during the Rotary Peace Project Incubator on the 2nd November in Geneva.
- Exchange platform: One important potential outcome of this workshop is the coalescence of an established network of Rotary Peace Fellows, Rotarians, Rotaract members, peace practitioners, and international experts interested in using cultural resources as peacebuilding and conflict resolution tools, and willing to cooperate in the future. While it is not difficult to find examples of international efforts of cooperation related to war, the creation of working networks of peace practitioners, is a fundamental ambition of this effort.

Note: Because this is a sequence of workshops, we highly recommend that participants register, and participate in the complete sequence of interconnected workshops. Participants will be asked to do small homework exercises during the breaks between workshops.