



Boldline Religious Freedom Proposal

August 8, 2018

Multi-Faith Neighbors Network

creating resilient communities

General Information:

Name: GlocalNet Inc. – a registered 501(c)(3)

Address: 1870 Rufe Snow Dr, Keller, TX 76248

Industry: Religious Freedom and Community Development

Biography: [Bob Roberts, Jr.](#)

Pastor Bob Roberts has partnered with the U.S. Government in other projects but not for this initiative. This program, Multi-Faith Neighbors Network (MFNN), has started around the United States and in Pakistan but are hoping to scale it for maximum impact.

If chosen, I will fully participate in the full three-day accelerator. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Roberts, Jr.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Bob Roberts, Jr.

Problem Statement:

The tension between Evangelicals and Muslims has never been more intense. With the rise of populism around the world, religious freedom is being taken away in the name of security and politics. Hate crimes, terrorism, and genocide are constantly on the news and the thing many people blame for these atrocities: religion.

The Southern Poverty Law Center [documented](#) a 197% increase in the number of anti-Muslim hate groups from 2015 to 2017. Violence has followed, with 2016 witnessing a [67% surge](#) in anti-Muslim hate crimes, a level not seen since the post- 9/11 period. A recent [Pew survey](#) found that out of nine religious groups, Muslims were viewed the least warmly by most Americans.

Evangelicals from the United States have the most negative view of Muslims according to [Lifeway Research](#). The only group worse, is evangelical pastors. Evangelicals are the largest group of Christians in the United States (65 million) and account for 750 million people worldwide. Something has to be done. The relationship between Christians and Muslims has historically been misunderstood and avoided.

Multi-Faith Neighbors Network aims to foster relationship building between faith groups that would otherwise not have the opportunity to engage in the kind of transformational dialogue that can culminate in grassroots mobilization efforts to protect religious minorities in cities and neighborhoods around the world. This is more than tolerance, it is deep friendships that work together to serve their city.

Idea:

The world is changed when the masses rally behind a message or an idea. And when it comes to issues of faith, no one has access to the masses like the clergy. Grassroots leadership is essential to bringing about change in national perceptions of minorities and the “other.”

Multi-Faith Neighbors Network has begun a movement of clergy, building relationships based on trust between each other, their families, and their congregations. The idea is to capitalize on the ties to clergy and develop a network that is built on trust and respect for one another. This network would then collaborate with existing community institutions to try to teach tolerance and understanding over the long-term, while being prepared over the short-term to counter religiously inspired violence and hate whenever and wherever it emerges.

The process begins with a three-day retreat with clergy utilizing a high-quality and effective method of interreligious dialogue. Time is spent developing a real understanding of each other, listening to each other’s stories and dealing with perceptions of the other to create an environment of transparency. The results, thus far, have been transformative; forging friendships where there once was mistrust.

Following this retreat, clergy participate in five other objectives to deepen relationships and reach the masses:

1. Visit each other’s home for a meal with families.
2. Gather congregations together for an event.
3. Work together on a service project in their city.
4. Protect each other from religious persecution.
5. Build a national network of MNFF.

Resource Requirements:

Here is what we have: Pastor Bob Roberts and Imam Mohamed Magid have the ability to convene top religious clerics and bring them to the table to have deep and honest conversations. We also have a proven process that has worked in Pakistan and around the United States. This has led to deep, honest relationships between faith congregations and community service projects. We are also going straight to the people. This is not a media campaign or just a conference.

The only thing we do not have is the resources to scale. The model has been proven to work in Pakistan and the United States and we believe can be implemented in any region where religious freedom is being suppressed. With financial and personnel support, we believe this grassroots movement can grow to reach millions of people of faith that work together for religious freedom.

Best Potential Partners:

No one else is doing what we are doing. Ideal partners are those who have skills much different than ours. Pastor Bob Roberts and Imam Mohamed Magid have incredible convening power of local faith leaders. Their ability to remain exclusive in their faith traditions while challenging all faiths to live in peace with each other is unmatched.

We would love to partner with organizations that have deep ties to certain counties and share similar goals. These organizations could also provide ongoing local trainings after the retreats have been completed.

1.) International Center for Religion and Diplomacy

- They have a unique ability to provide ongoing training and support

2.) Chris Sieple & Institute for Global Engagement

- They are an entity with proven results around the world. We have worked with them in Vietnam on projects and they are a wealth of knowledge and expertise in this field.

3.) Search for Common Ground

- They are a like-minded organization that could be a real asset if we were to partner together.

Ideal End State:

To have built a relational network across the world, so in times of crisis we can stand together.

On a local level, this means resilient cities that are flourishing because the faith communities are working together to meet the needs of their city. Working together for the betterment of their city in times of peace will give them a strong voice.

On a global level, this means a network of faith leaders who led their congregations towards civic engagement and deep multi-faith friendships. These leaders who are in the majority are always standing up for the rights of the minority.

This initiative can be done wherever the State Department feels religious freedom is being limited. We could take this to any of the Tier 1 or Tier 2 Countries of Particular Concern (as identified by the USCIRF) and start building meaningful relationships between religious groups in order to change perceptions.