

# PROPOSAL:

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## Global Opportunity for Peace And Security Today - GOPAST

Pennsylvania Center for International  
Exchange and Partnership - PCIEP

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# BOLDLINE PARTNERSHIP ACCELERATOR ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

PROMOTING PEACE, SECURITY AND ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND CREATING NETWORKS FOR SERVICE LEARNING AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS AND PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE EXCHANGES GLOBALLY

This proposal from the Pennsylvania Center for International Exchange and Partnership (PCIEP) seeks to engage youth in colleges and universities in India, Zambia, Oman, and Sierra Leone. Youth anywhere in the world carry the previous generations dreams and aspirations while creating the world they envision they will live in. Their energy, passion, ability to dream and connect with youth from all over the world no matter what their culture, faith or belief system can make a positive impact in promoting religious freedom globally.

## Proposals Submissions Must Include:

1. Name of organization submitting partnership

PENNSYLVANIA CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE AND PARTNERSHIP (PCIEP)

2. Full address and postal code

46 Old English Lane, Elizabethtown, PA 17022, USA

3. For-profit or not-for-profit status

Not-for-profit

4. Industry affiliation (e.g., health care, aviation, energy)

International Education/Peace Studies/Human Rights/

5. Links to biographies of the participants or LinkedIn profiles (preferable) that will be shared with the other participants

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/robert-william-0856681>

6. Has your organization ever partnered with the U.S. government? Describe.

No

7. What stage is your partnership business plan (new idea, existing program going to scale)?

This proposal seeks to strengthen and expand on current partnerships established by PCIEP as well as new partnerships to be created that address issues of religious, socio-economic and political conflict. PCIEP has connected with the following institutions in the following countries:

INDIA: ROOTS CHARITABLE TRUST, INC., Chennai

Madras Christian College, Center for Peace Studies, Chennai

Ewarts College, Chennai

Gandhi Ashram, Ahmedabad

OMAN: Sultan Qaboos University, Center for Islamic and Arabic Studies, Muscat

ZAMBIA: Africa Centre for Innovative Governance, Lusaka

SIERRA LEONE: NGO to be identified

8. Signed commitment statement to participate in the full three-day accelerator program in or around Washington, D.C.

I commit to participating in the full three-day accelerator program in or around Washington DC when it is held in late October 2018.

Robert William

Founder and President, CEO

Pennsylvania Center for International Exchange and Partnership (PCIEP)

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### Proposal Information:

**Problem Statement** (250 words max): *Describe the problem you are trying to solve and any relevant background information. Address the impact and innovation potential of your idea given the status quo.*

Against the backdrop of a global environment where international tensions and conflicts continue to pose a major security threat to the United States, creating an environment for peace and the diffusion of interfaith conflict has become extremely critical. Very often, these interfaith conflicts stem from religious leaders and communities being divided instead of coming together to solve community issues and problems before they explode in major conflict that leads to the destruction of life, property and communities. For example, Hindu-Moslem tensions can explode at any time in India as they did in 2009 in Gujarat, India.

One segment of civil society that have the drive, the energy, the passion and the ability to come up with creative and innovative solutions to community problems are the students enrolled in colleges and universities all over the world. More can be done to bring youth from different parts of the world together in one forum as well as to keep them engaged on an ongoing basis to dialogue, exchange ideas, and build relationships and

friendships. Bringing students and student leaders from different parts of the world where they can exchange ideas about how they promote religious freedom is one way to address this problem

Creating partnerships and networks that can offer internship, service learning and volunteer opportunities for students in each other's country would not only help to exchange ideas for religious freedom globally but help to promote human rights and cross-cultural understanding in our world.

**Idea** (250 words max): *What is the core concept for the partnership; what would it look like? How will working in a partnership obtain the outcome that is required? How does this advance religious freedom in a way that aligns with U.S. interests?*

The core concept for the partnership and creating new networks is to create opportunities for student exchanges that will enable students to engage in conversations internationally in cross-cultural settings and together address the issues of religious freedom and how to promote religious freedom across borders. By physically going into another culture and engaging in conversations with their counterparts in that country, students and student leaders can develop great insights into the root causes of conflicts in religious communities and brainstorm and come up with creative ways to address those conflicts which hamper the promotion of religious freedom.

These opportunities can be created and provided to students through internships, service learning opportunities, and people-to-people exchanges.

By creating specific internship or service learning programs at institutions in India, Oman, Zambia, and Sierra Leone, the youth can step out of their comfort zones, observe for themselves and engaged in dialogue with local people in the community they go to and work together to promote religious freedom. In addition, they can see for themselves that the absence of religious conflict and an environment of religious freedom does contribute to economic and community development and prosperity because of religious freedom in those societies.

The internships and service learning experiences enable students to return to their home countries with a fresh perspective and insights into conflict resolution and how interfaith dialogue can help to promote peace.

**Resource Requirements** (250 words max): *Describe what is needed to implement your idea (resources, stakeholder buy-in, legal requirements, etc.). Address the feasibility of your idea.*

PCIEP has a Memorandum of Understanding with both Madras Christian College and ROOTS Charitable Trust, Inc, in Chennai, South India so this idea will be implemented through those MOUs. The Center for Peace Studies at Madras Christian College will serve a critical role in connecting with their network in promoting the concept that religious freedom helps create a peaceful society that is conducive to economic development. However, additional staff, resource development and trainers are needed to successfully promote and implement these new initiatives.

ROOTS Charitable Trust, Inc. is an NGO that works with communities all over India however the operations will need additional paid staff to implement this program. PCIEP and ROOTS plan to create a skills development center in Chennai, South India.

**BUDGET:** PCIEP's funding needs for the first and second year program is \$700,000 per year.

**ANNUAL BUDGET BREAKDOWN** \$350,000 per year:

- a. Staff and local resource specialists: \$150,000 (Additional staff in the US Office as well as Program Coordinators in India, Zambia, Sierra Leone and Oman)
- b. Travel: \$100,000 (travel allowance for staff and college students from the United States to travel to India, Zambia, Sierra Leone and Oman for three to four-week internship, service learning, exchange and research programs)

- c. Program Development - allocations in the four countries:
  - I. India: \$60,000
  - II. Zambia: \$20,000
  - III. Sierra Leone: \$10,000
  - IV. Oman: \$10,000 (Seed money)
- b. IN-KIND DONATIONS TO MATCH THE GRANT: The local partners and institutions will be expected to commit to providing in-kind donations to implement this program

**Best Potential Partners** (250 words max): *Describe ideal partners (from 2-10) or types of partners that would make for a successful partnership.*

Since PCIEP's mission is to promote international relations and understanding through educational experience such as study abroad programs as well as through international internships, service learning and volunteer experiences, the local partners will ideally be educational institutions and NGOs.

The following local partners have been identified as ready to partner with PCIEP:

INDIA: ROOTS CHARITABLE TRUST, INC., Chennai

Madras Christian College, Center for Peace Studies, Chennai

Ewarts College, Chennai

Gandhi Ashram, Ahmedabad

OMAN: Sultan Qaboos University, Center for Islamic and Arabic Studies, Muscat

ZAMBIA: Africa Centre for Innovative Governance, Lusaka

SIERRA LEONE: NGO to be identified

**Ideal End State** (150 words max): *Describe what success will look like with the implementation of your idea. Address the impact of your idea and its innovation potential*

I believe we will see the emergence of a new generation of future leaders who will have formed lifelong relationships and friendships and bonds with a new level of understanding of how religious freedom can indeed promote economic prosperity. Through their hands on cross cultural experiences through internships and service learning and study abroad programs, the next generation of leaders will have a new perspective and commitment to promoting religious freedom as a vital part of national security that can lead to economic prosperity and community development in any society in the world. I know this for a fact because I was born in India and raised in three different countries in Africa: Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Zambia. I came to the United States in 1978 as an international student. I believe that religious freedom is the key to a world of peace, security and prosperity for all people.



PENNSYLVANIA CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE AND PARTNERSHIP