



REFRAME: Restoring Freedom of Religion and Belief in Malaysia

Proposals Submissions Must Include:

1. **Name of organization submitting partnership:** Muslims for Progressive Values
2. **Full address and postal code:** 1626 Wilcox Ave. #702, Los Angeles, CA 90028
3. **For-profit or not-for-profit status:** not-for-profit
4. **Industry affiliation (e.g., health care, aviation, energy):** Civil Society
5. **Links to biographies of the participants or LinkedIn profiles (preferable) that will be shared with the other participants:** [Biography](#)
6. **Has your organization ever partnered with the U.S. government?** No
7. **What stage is your partnership business plan:** new idea
8. Signed commitment statement to participate in the full three-day accelerator program in or around Washington, D.C.

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.*

Religious extremism is a global phenomenon, and it rests in an ideology, which is on the rise in Malaysia, once known as a moderate Islamic country due to its religiously and ethnically pluralistic society. Nowadays, citizens witness frequent racist, fascist, sexist, violent, or discriminatory remarks, and acts of violence made in the name of Islam against other religious minorities. Extreme and radical interpretations of the Islamic religious texts, and the institutionalization and politicization of these interpretations, contribute greatly to declining cultural and societal harmony, thus sowing distrust and destabilizing communities. Change lies within Malaysia's faith-based and human rights organizations, which can make changes from within, by involving different stakeholders such as youth, the public, civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector with activities to counter negative societal discrimination and attitudes towards religious minority rights and interfaith dialogue.

The lack of religious freedom in the Muslim world is deeply rooted in religious extremism, an ideology perpetrated by State, non-State actors with the support of governments. To successfully counter religious extremism, one has to get to the root of the problem, namely, "non-violent extremist ideology", starting with the youth, therefore taking a long-term vision to this problem.

Given that the Malaysian partners are ex-extremist youths themselves, we have the advantage of understanding the radical mindset for which we are countering.



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?*

Muslims for Progressive Values (MPV) proposes to implement **REFRAME: Restoring Freedom of Religion and Belief in Malaysia**, a three-year initiative that unites a broad-based coalition of youth, human rights organizations led by our partner, the Malaysian-based Komuniti Muslim Universal (KMU) for greater inclusivity for religious minority rights and non-violence at the community level, and advocate for the revision of discriminatory practices and laws at the policy level on religious minorities.

The partnership is a two-stage initiative with *community advocacy* through an **online educational campaign** that includes six multi-level educational and awareness-raising campaigns using traditional and new social media to reach the Malaysian public at all levels and in the country's five major languages; reaching 300,000 youth, aged 18-30 years old, 300,000 Malaysians in the general population, with a minimum of 30,000 social media engagement metrics; establishment of **youth camps** for on-the-ground knowledge and awareness that targets 75 youths from different backgrounds resulting in positive social attitudes towards people of all faiths.

Stage two, *policy advocacy*, will encourage dialogue and policy revision at a higher level. It will start with the formation of REFRAME steering committees in order to carry out two **roundtable discussions**, one **forum** with 30 participating multi-stakeholders, and, one **high level forum** with 100 participating multi-stakeholders attending and engaging the discourse. At the end of REFRAME, 500 copies of REFRAME handbook will be distributed for advocacy best practices on FORB/E.

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.*

A new Malaysian government has just been voted in and the opportunity to support the government toward a "new Malaysia" is now, before the five-year term is up. The government has been making positive moves but the push back from the radicalized Malay Muslim public has been harsh.

Not only is the implementation of this project time sensitive, the scope of the work covers a broad demography both in age group, ethnicity, stakeholders covering different faiths and non-faiths, human rights organizations and the government. Funds and resources will be needed to enable simultaneous implementation of the bottom-up and top-down approaches.



Capacity of the core-organizing team of KMU will need to be funded financially, where as many programmatic expenses can be donated by the private sectors such as graphic designing, marketing, printing, and video production needs, pro-bono legal and accounting services, and sponsorships for youth camps, a round-table and an international high-level forum.

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

Coalition of Malaysian Non-Governmental Organizations (COMANGO), Malaysian Action Coalition (GBM), Council of The Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST), Islamic Renaissance Front (IRF), Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR), Alliance of Inclusive Muslims (AIM), Malaysian Commission of Human Rights (SUHAKAM) and The Ministry of Religious Affairs of Malaysia, Morocco and Tunisia.

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*

As of now, Malaysians are boxed in into race and religious beliefs and pitted against one another. The Project aims to change the hearts and minds of Malaysian society, particularly youth, by working through religious traditions rather than against them. By changing the hearts and minds of the youth, particularly that of Muslims, from one of intolerance for religious minorities to one of acceptance and of an inclusive worldview, the ideal outcome would be for a substantive number of the youth population to shape a Malaysia in the near future where all Malaysians are treated as equals.