**BOLDLINE PARTNERSHIP ACCELERATOR ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

**PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY:**

**FEDERATION OF INDIAN AMERICAN CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS**

**FIACONA**

**Washington DC**

**August 23, 2018**

**A drawing of a person

Description generated with high confidence**

**Proposals Submission Details:**

1. Name of organization submitting partnership

Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations (FIACONA)

1. Full address and postal code

110 Maryland Avenue, NE, Suite 303, Washington, D.C. 20002

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

Not-for-Profit

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

Human rights/Religious Freedom

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

https://www.linkedin.com/in/john-prabhudoss-1a0b2015

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

No.

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

FIACONA has been in existence for over 15 years. FIACONA counts over 600,000 people among its members living in every single state in the United States and Canada. Besides these Indian American Christians, the Federation also counts support from several thousand Christian churches and movements in every single state across the US.

Over the years, FIACONA has engaged in activities to inform and educate the public about the state of religious freedom in India. Protecting the interest of two thousand year old Christian Church in the Union of India and ensuring it’s the social, cultural, and political space besides the protection of fundamental rights to safety, security, and equal status of every single member of the church remains a priority for FIACONA.

FIACONA is committed to ensuring the religious freedom of all religions and minorities in countries around the world.

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

John Prabhudoss

john@fiacona.org

President, FIACONA

202-738-4704

**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.*

Interfaith conflicts in nations around the world but specifically in some Asian countries has been prevalent throughout history. Such conflicts are often rooted in the lack of a willingness to find common ground, exercise restraint in times of conflict, and a general lack of will power to seek to understand another point of view. This lack of mutual understanding and respect within and among religious communities has tragically led to mass riots resulting in loss of life and destruction of property. The ultimate victims of such violence is families whose livelihood is often destroyed, family members being killed, and communities being destroyed. When unity and harmony in a diverse community is destroyed, economic and community development is seriously impacted and even set back. This proposal seeks to launch inter-faith roundtables to be held in Nepal and Sri Lanka.

**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 of this proposal in order to address the issues highlighted in the Problem Statement is to promote interreligious dialogue by bringing together key leaders in the community and facilitate discussion to identify key issues that had led to such communal conflicts and together, develop steps that can be implemented that can help reduce the potential for such conflicts in the future. By promoting dialogue in a framework that promotes and encouraged mutual respect and a willingness to work with each other in partnership, the expected outcome is the promotion of religious freedom within the community whereby there is mutual respect and accommodation.

**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.*

Several resources will be needed to implement and launch this INTER-FAITH ROUND TABLE DIALOGUE:

1. A suitable neutral venue such as a conference or retreat center will need to be identified that can serve as host in Nepal and Sri Lanka.
2. Identifying a responsible and experienced support staff person(s) who will be contracted to manage the logistics and other components of hosting such an event.
3. Identifying key stake holders and community leaders who should be invited to the round-table and then planning and developing an outreach campaign to bring them to the event
4. Ensuring that funds that are acquired for this idea are received and can be transferred legally, safely and effectively to the local partners in Nepal and Sri Lanka. It is critical that accountability is incorporated into every aspect of this idea to ensure that the integrity and credibility of the organizers and local partners are protected.
5. **Proposed Budget: $600,000. A detailed budget will be developed upon approval of concept/proposal based on the following broad categories:**
   1. Staff - $200,000
   2. Travel, venue, and materials - $200,000
   3. Event Development and Support for each site - $100,000 for Nepal and $100,000 for Sri Lanka
   4. In-kind donations to match the grant
6. Proposed Meeting Schedule:
   1. October 2018 – Convene International Video Conference with US, Nepal and Sri Lanka partners
   2. November – Team from FIACONA make site visits to have organizational planning meetings on site
   3. January 2019 – First Roundtable Dialogue to meet in Nepal
   4. March 2019 – Second Roundtable Dialogue to meet in Sri Lanka
   5. Fall 2019 and 2020 – Local Partners organize and continue meeting either every three months or every six months in Nepal and Sri Lanka

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

Since a cornerstone of this proposal is bringing together community and religious leaders for a round table dialogue on examining causes of inter-religious tensions and how to diffuse such tensions before they escalate into large scale conflicts, it is vital that the right partners are identified for this program to be successful. Such partners who are already engaged on the ground in the community in Nepal and Sri Lanka could be inter-faith coalitions or ministariums representative of religions active in Nepal and Sri Lanka. Certainly non-profit organizations with a faith-based approach to community development need to be also present at the round-table.

Proposed DRAFT Agenda for Round Table Dialogue (Modelled after the Ministerium for Religious Freedom hosted by the US Department of State) for local and international partners (applies to both Nepal and Sri Lanka):

* 1. Day One: Registration, welcome, introductions
     1. Morning Keynote Speaker
     2. Identifying past challenges and successes to inter-religious dialogue
     3. Power of collaboration versus competition to promote international religious freedom
     4. Afternoon Keynote Speaker
     5. Discussion Session One: Topic to be determined with local partners
     6. Discussion Session Two: Topics to be determined with local partners
  2. Day Two:
     1. Morning Keynote Speaker
     2. Discussion Session Three: Review of “Commitment to Collaborate Document” to serve as a framework for future roundtable dialogues
     3. Discussion Session Four: Formation of Working Group
     4. Afternoon Session: Strategic Session on Next Steps
     5. Roundtable concludes

NOTE: Above agenda subject to modification and revisions.

**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*

Bringing religious and community leaders to the table is challenging in any cultural context. This roundtable dialogue proposed by FIACONA would help facilitate discussion on addressing key issues. The goal is to also educate and increase the awareness of participants to recognize that religious freedom and harmony in the community leads to economic development. So a key outcome would be for participants to work together to produce an agreement that will outline steps that they will commit to. This could include meeting quarterly to keep the dialogue going, create a working group that will create and develop ideas for community engagement focused on strengthening the community, promoting unity and religious freedom. As relationships are established between local participants and communication is strengthened, and unity is promoted, the chance for peace and religious freedom to prevail increases greatly.