



Academia in the Public Sphere: Islam and Muslims in World Contexts

A Small Grants Program

The SSRC is pleased to announce the launch of a two-cycle program of funding in support of outreach activities undertaken by Title VI funded National Resource Centers (NRCs) on U.S. campuses, with a special thematic focus on “Islam and Muslims in World Contexts.” The objective of the program is to support activities that successfully disseminate the results and insights of academic research on different societies and regions to the general public, and encourage public scholarship by facilitating interaction between research scholars and a variety of constituents including media, policy institutions, business and local communities.

Current Title VI NRC recipients on U.S. campuses are eligible to apply for grants up to \$50,000 per center, to be used over a period of 12 months to enhance existing capacities on their campuses, or to create new activities, for promoting public understanding of Muslim societies and communities in all their variety and diversity across all geographical regions of the world. Support will be available for outreach to media, business, policy institutions and the general public but not for K-12 education. The proposed activities should reflect the particular strengths of the applicant center as well as the particularities of its university context and geographical location. The proposed activities should supplement and complement outreach activities planned and carried out through existing Title VI and university funds. The proposals should clearly explain how such funds would be used to enhance existing capacity to engage in outreach. Applications that involve more than one NRC on the same campus or across campuses are encouraged as are applications from administrative units overseeing multiple Title VI programs. The same NRC may not appear on multiple applications.

Activities to be proposed by applicant centers may include (but are not limited to) one or more of the following:

- Dissemination of academic knowledge on the history, culture, intellectual traditions, contributions to global culture, civilization and thought and the contemporary politics of Muslim societies and communities. Special attention to neglected topics and regions that are poorly understood by the general public would be particularly encouraged.
- Enhancing the public visibility and engagement of individual university faculty and scholars (including graduate students) through media appearances, work with journalists and dissemination to broader publics.
- New activities and public forums that address and reach diverse constituents
- The development of digital and print resources for information dissemination, especially through collaborative inter-institutional networking. These can include websites, information sheets, policy briefs, press releases, newsletters, and documentaries.
- The development of operational materials for outreach to different constituencies (such as media, business, policy institutions) including handbooks, directories,

- contact lists, mailing lists, databases and checklists to strengthen individual and institutional capacity for outreach.
- Activities that help train scholars to enhance their capacity to communicate beyond scholarly circles. These could include communication training, internships, mentorships/apprenticeships, tutorials and the creation of taskforces for engagement with media, business, policy (government, private and NGO) and other groups.

Applications materials should be submitted by the NRC director, or in the case of multiple NRCs applying jointly, a single representative, and must include the following:

- A cover sheet containing basic information on the proposal and submitting center(s)
- A 5 -8 page narrative proposal that should include information on the following: the current outreach activities and strengths of the center(s); plans for the grant period; potential impact of the activities on the targeted audiences; the expected returns of these activities for the center(s); expectations concerning the sustainability of outreach beyond the grant period
- Appendices elaborating on information provided in the narrative proposal
- A proposed budget
- CVs of relevant personnel
- A letter of support from the university administrator to whom the applicant center/unit reports
- A copy of the most recent Title VI proposal and copies of the NRC's operating budget and Title VI budgets or, in the case of multiple NRCs applying jointly, all relevant operating budgets and all relevant Title VI budgets.

The grant period is for 12 months: from March 15, 2008 to March 14, 2009. Grant funds can be used for honoraria, travel, meeting expenses, acquisition and preparation of materials for dissemination, web development, and costs associated with media appearances, communications training and consultations with experts. Limited staff salary and overhead can also be covered but should not exceed 15% of the overall budget. A short report would be required at the end of the grant period describing the impact and medium and long-term planning resulting from the activities undertaken through the grant. Grantees in year one may be eligible to apply for an add-on grant in year two of the program.

Deadlines:

Announcement of RFP – November 9, 2007

Applications received – January 21, 2008

Selection committee meeting – February 22, 2008

Decisions announced – March 1, 2008

Grant period commences – March 15, 2008

For inquiries contact Tom Asher, Program Officer: asher@ssrc.org.

Note: This program is funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Department of Education Title VI program, dedicated to international education and public education, in order to complement existing federal funding.