



## **The Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness**

### **Social Connectedness Fellowship Application**

#### **Research Project #1 - Peace First**

The Social Connectedness Fellowship provides students and recent graduates with the opportunity to carry out research, writing, analysis, and outreach related to overcoming social isolation and building social connectedness. Fellows are paired with partner organizations that work to build belonging and social inclusion across a variety of thematic areas—climate change, disability and older people’s rights, refugee integration, inclusive education, placemaking and urban design, and much more.

#### **Project Details:**

**Partner:** [Peace First](#) is a global organization co-led by young people that empowers youth ages 13-25 to create a more compassionate, just and peaceful world by providing digital tools, community support, start-up funding and stories that celebrate their social change journeys and impact.

**Location of Fellow:** Remote

#### **Project Description:**

***What role do youth-led initiatives play in promoting a community’s well-being and social connectedness?***

Peace First supports young people to tackle any injustice in their communities that is important to them – young people are working on everything from disparities in education, to a lack of mental health services, to the stigmatization of menstruation, to environmental injustice to the secondary effects of COVID-19. Young people report that their projects are supporting community dialogue about



difficult issues, sparking others to take action, and sometimes resulting in structural change. With hundreds of young people each year receiving grants to bring a wide array of project ideas to life, we are interested in understanding more about the collective impact of these projects on their communities and the unique role that *youth-led* social change projects play in advancing social connectedness and community well-being. Key areas for exploration include:

- How does having young people, specifically, lead community work impact communities? What unique role do young people play?
- What direct impact are youth-led projects within Peace First's community having on their communities? How are they advancing community well-being, belonging, and engagement?

The Fellow will conduct a literature review into the role young people specifically play in advancing community connectedness and well-being through leading social action. The Fellow will conduct a qualitative analysis of reflections/impact reports submitted by young people leading projects with Peace First's support as part of Peace First's Annual Evaluation. This analysis would aim to summarize a) the collective direct impact projects are having on Sustainable Development Goals and key thematic areas (gender equality, health & well-being, education, etc.) and b) the cross-cutting indirect impact on community well-being and social connectedness, regardless of issue area.

The Fellow would collaborate with Peace First to develop an interview protocol and interview young project leaders as well as community members who have benefited from their projects to deepen our analysis of the impact youth-led projects are having on their communities and the role this is having on community well-being and cohesion. Using insights emerging from this research, the Fellow would collaborate with Peace First to develop updated indicators to help Peace First measure outcomes for communities benefiting from youth-led



social action. The Fellow can also reach out to other youth-serving organizations and youth for a greater understanding of their impact models.

**Key Deliverables:**

1. 2 blog articles
2. Brief (2 page) summary of key issues from literature review
3. Interview protocol
4. Community engagement initiative (virtual event etc. to engage Peace First's global youth community around findings)
5. Final report

**Key Skills/Competencies Required:**

- An academic social science background, or equivalent work/life experience.
- Qualitative and quantitative research skills, including experience conducting interviews for research or evaluation purposes.
- Experience conducting qualitative data analysis with a large data set.
- Strong intercultural competency and the ability to communicate effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Experience working with young people is preferred.
- Knowledge of the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals is an asset.
- Working language is English; Spanish or Arabic language skills are an asset.

**How to Apply:**

All applicants must fill out the [Google Form application](#) by March 7, 2021 at 11:59 pm EST. Applicants can apply for 1 or 2 projects. In addition to answering the standardized questions, applicants must also answer a specific question for each project that they are interested in. Specific question for Research Project #1 - PeaceFirst:

1. Given the global nature of our community and the diversity of projects young people are working on, how would you approach understanding



community impact in a way that feels both broad enough to capture a range of contexts and approaches and specific enough to feel meaningful? What tactics might help with this? (Maximum 250 words)