



**SAMUEL CENTRE
FOR SOCIAL
CONNECTEDNESS**

**Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness
2024 Fellowship Program
Project Proposal**

PARTNER ORGANIZATION:

Seeds of Peace

PROJECT TITLE:

Making Peace Possible: Bridge-Building and Belonging
Through Interfaith Education

Partner Organization: Seeds of Peace

For over 30 years, Seeds of Peace has been synonymous with peace and conflict transformation. Since 1993 when the American journalist John Wallach founded it, the organisation, headquartered in the US, has inspired and equipped new generations of leaders in regions of conflict with the relationships, knowledge, and skills needed to effect practical economic, social, and political change in ways that advance peace. Together, we strive to create dialogue-based solutions in some of the most conflict-ridden regions of our times – Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, India and around the world. Across all regions, Seeds of Peace has directly trained and supported nearly 8,000 young adults and educators and engaged tens of thousands more through dialogue.

Our mission is to inspire and cultivate new generations of global leaders in communities divided by conflict. We equip them with the skills and relationships they need to accelerate social, economic, and political changes essential for peace.

Our programmatic approach is grounded in the individual/personal theory of change: conflict transformation is advanced through a transformative change of key groups of individuals in terms of their attitudes, values, skills, perceptions, or circumstances. Using dialogue as our primary peacebuilding tool of choice, we engage with and empower youth and educators to become conflict resilient, compassionate, and humane leaders.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Location of the Project: Mumbai, India

We are open to accepting a remote Fellow, although there is a strong preference for an India-based candidate. The selected Fellow can expect to engage in in-person outreach and work with the Seeds of Peace team.

Section 1: Description of the Project

Among the many programs Seeds of Peace India conducts, the **Interfaith Harmony Camp (IFHC)** is a signature property. This year, we intend to expand our interfaith programming by way of two iterations and/or a national-level interfaith harmony conference. IFHC is modeled after the Seeds of Peace international camp but is contextualized to one of India's most pressing social problems – interfaith conflict. In our week-long camp, young people are trained to get a deeper understanding of religions, the history of conflict, and measures of resolution. In-depth engagement between participants of different religions is a way of fostering **belonging** between otherwise segregated communities. We use harmony as the bigger purpose to bring these participants together through interfaith dialogue, team activities, workshops, speaker sessions, etc.

The SCSC Fellow will be an integral part of the design and implementation journey, helping the cause of social cohesiveness. At Seeds of Peace, we want to better understand the strengths of our interfaith

programming, and the impact it has on participants. A Fellow can expect to help us answer some of these questions by engaging in network mapping, alumni engagement, and improving monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Section 2: Goals of the Project

IFHC was launched in 2014 to strengthen interfaith relationships between the young people in a country experiencing increasing polarization along the lines of religious identity. The program advocates diversity and pluralism, which becomes the basis for cohesion and belonging. We believe exposure to other faiths, an appreciation for diverse traditions, and an opportunity to engage with different points of view help build leaders, through the lens of interfaith harmony.

This research is an opportunity to help us strengthen our community work, and better understand our impact. A Fellow can look forward to knowing that their research will help inform our programs, measure impact, and build a stronger interfaith, harmony-focused network.

The overarching goals of this project are:

- Inform IFHC understanding of impact, including exploring how IFHC can expand interfaith programming globally
- Understand our impact through *Studying, collating, and interpreting impact data from all past iterations, and helping create stronger MEAL frameworks.*

Section 3: Guiding Questions

1. How do we strengthen interfaith harmony conversations in a country that is witnessing increasing polarization?
2. What has been the **impact** of IFHC so far?
 - a. What impact does our program have on participants?
 - b. In what ways, if any, are our alumni using their learnings in their day to day lives?
 - c. What has worked well and what needs to be improved?
 - d. Who can be our potential allies and partner organisations?
 - e. How can we improve our measurement, and evaluation frameworks to better understand and adjust our programming?
3. What role does interfaith work play in building belonging, within and between communities?

Section 4: Key Deliverables

- **1 blog post** (500 – 1,000 words), posted to SCSC’s website
- **A Community Engagement Initiative (CEI)** in support of the Final Output
 - o This may take the form of organizing and facilitating focus groups or interviews with key stakeholders (i.e., coaches, training participants, workshop participants, and others).
 - o Possible outreach to individuals / groups with a survey designed to raise the questions of the impact of and on coaches / dialogue partners.

- **A Final Report**
 - A 25 – 35-page research report supported by primary and secondary source data. The Fellow will track and incorporate answers from the interviews and focus groups, analyzing them for patterns, and key findings.
- **A Final Presentation** with the cohort

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Key Attributes and Skills in the Applicant

The ideal applicant will have the following qualities:

- Humanities graduate or postgraduate, preferably from an Indian university
- Politically and socially aware, with a keen interest in history, culture, and social psychology
- Proficiency in English and comfortable with Hindi, in their writing and research skills
- Strong work ethic, integrity, ability to stick to timelines and deliver on commitments.
- Desirable values: Social consciousness, desire to serve communities, belief in pluralist and secular values,

About the Fellowship/What the Fellowship Offers

The Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness (SCSC) Social Connectedness Fellowship empowers young people and people with a variety of different types of lived experience to partner with groundbreaking organizations from around the world to carry out innovative research on social isolation and belonging.

SCSC defines belonging as connection to the 4 Ps: people, place, power, and purpose. This is to say that belonging comes through our relationships with other people as well as through our rootedness in nature, our ability to influence social, political and economic decision-making, and our capacity to find shared meaning and purpose in our lives. The Fellowship offers a unique opportunity to apply the lens of Belonging, thinking intersectionally, and holistically about the problems of the 21st century.

These are paid positions, starting on **May 6, 2024**, and ending on **September 27, 2024**. From **May – August the position is full time, 35 hours per week** and in **September the hours are reduced to part time, 10-20 hours per week**.

SCSC Offers:

- Competitive wages adjusted according to each Fellow’s geographic location and experience.
 - Applicants for this position can expect a range of \$15-24 CAD per hour
- Opportunity to work with national & international community partners
- Capacity building, skills development, & mentorship
- Ability to network, and be part of an international cohort
- All Fellowship works are published on the SCSC website
- The Fellow’s work will be supported by regular supervision meetings with both organizations, and a 1-week long orientation at SCSC.

Program Requirements:

- Be able to work at least 4 hours per day (in alignment with the 9-5 workday) in Eastern Standard Time to ensure overlap with the Toronto-based team.
- Be ready to engage in regular online meetings, check-ins, capacity building sessions, and work remotely.
- Ability to take initiative, manage their time effectively, work independently, and draw from different resources to support their work.
- Have a passion for research and building a more inclusive, belonging-oriented world.

EQUITY STATEMENT

The Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness is an equal opportunity employer, and we encourage applicants to apply even if they do not meet all the criteria. We believe all candidates have something to bring to the organization and the role. If you have skills outside the job description that you think can benefit the project, let us know in your cover letter. We encourage all equity-seeking groups, such as immigrants, Black and Indigenous communities, people of color, women, young people, 2SLGBTQ+ community members, people with disabilities, and people who have been justice-impacted to apply.

Please tell us if you need accommodation throughout the application process and we are happy to support you.

You can email any accommodation requests to scfellowship@scscglobal.org