

CALL FOR APPLICATION

“Youth Engagement with Religion
and Faith in the 21st Century”

28-29 July 2021

The Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF) and *Religions for Peace (RfP)* in collaboration with the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC); the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA); the Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA); the Pontifical and Royal University of Santo Tomas; Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University; Office of Religious Life, Princeton University; and the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University, are organizing a symposium on "**Youth Engagement with Religion and Faith in the 21st Century**," scheduled for 28-29 July 2021, followed by a publication of research and presentations to be launched in October 2021.

BACKGROUND

Countless studies and research initiatives, ranging from national to global efforts, have delved into the complex relationship between youth (and youth engagement) and religion in the modern world. While the place of youth at the centrality of shifting cultural dynamics is far more recognized today than ever before, youth engagement in traditional religious structures has begun to fade in most parts of the world. The realities exposed by studies such as these demand a nuanced and sophisticated exploration of the status of youth engagement with religion and faith in the 21st century. Far beyond the level of affiliation, it must be examined to what extent religious and spiritual dimensions inform, motivate, and activate youth within their communities. To what extent is youth activism (on climate, conflict, economics, racial justice, etc.) fuelled by the moral and ethical systems presented through their religious institutions? In what ways do religious worldviews (whether their own or distinct) form youth understanding of their own place in the world and inform their interactions with it? What spiritual or religious expressions have become central to youth 'religiosity' that hitherto has been considered distinct from traditional religious engagement?

AIM

The ICYF and *Religions for Peace*, alongside the other co-organisers, aim to address the above questions and more, as we bring together youth leaders, faith leaders, and top research and education institutions to explore the novel notions of youth engagement with religion and faith emerging in the 21st century by convening of a symposium on "**Youth Engagement with Religion and Faith in the 21st Century**," an intergenerational symposium that allows for partners and contributors to take on active roles and engage through the presentation of their work.

Recognizing the energy and commitment of youth leaders all over the world to advance the mission of multi-religious cooperation for comprehensive and holistic peace, *Religions for Peace* and ICYF issue this Call for Contributions to the upcoming symposium. The symposium will explore the theme of youth engagement with religion and faith, focusing on the interaction of youth and faith along the sub-themes of **Peacebuilding, Environment and Humanitarianism**. The Symposium will also be accompanied by a

future publication, drafted from the collated written or creative contributions of the Contributors.

VENUE & DATE

This symposium will be organized as a 4-hour virtual convening of roughly 25-30 contributors. It will include keynote addresses, short breaks, hour-long workshops with breakout sessions, and the anticipated outcome of concrete recommendations.

Location: Zoom Platform

Date: 28-29 July 2021

ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

This symposium will examine to what extent religious and spiritual dimensions inform, motivate, and activate youth within their communities, particularly on issues such as peacebuilding, environment and humanitarianism and in what ways do religious worldviews form youth understanding of their own place in the world and inform their interactions with it. As part of the symposium, there would be three concrete deliverables in addition to the symposium itself: 1.) an academic publication, 2.) an online publication that includes both the academic and creative submissions, and 3.) a policy recommendation paper.

Around 40-50 participants will be selected to make presentations among the recommended youth, experts, scholars, researchers, academics and practitioners, provided by various institutions and based on the criteria below that would take into consideration their age, gender, region, religion (including non-religious and indigenous) to ensure diversity and inclusivity as well as the substance of the contribution.

Criteria for the contributors/participants:

1. Dedicated intellectuals with a real passion to introduce initiatives for a better world within the scope of the forum.
2. Researchers who have personal, professional and educational knowledge related to the themes of discussions answering three or four questions reflecting their critical observations on youth and religion related dynamics within the sub-theme of peacebuilding, environment and humanitarianism.
3. Youth with an interest, exposure or experience in any of the three thematic areas of peacebuilding, environment and humanitarianism.
4. Must submit proposal/Extended Abstracts (2-3 pages) and their full papers at scheduled deadline.

Proposals/Extended Abstracts should:

- Be limited to 600-800 words (2-3 pages)
- Include the main problematics and subjects of the full text
- Contain essential elements of the full text to be written (methodology, structure and aim of the paper, primary sources etc.)

The full paper should be:

- No more than 5,000 words
- Be written and organized according to academic style
- Answering three or four questions reflecting their critical observations on youth and religion related dynamics, for example:

What do you/ your institution see happening – does religion seem to matter? How and Why?

What kinds of challenges does this pose?

What kind of opportunities?

With a view to co-existence and building of inclusive societies with youth at the centre, what recommendations for action or policy would you/your institution make to governments, intergovernmental actors and NGOs?

The selection of the final contributors/participants and general attendees will be made by the Selection Committee.

IMPORTANT DATES

Submission Deadline for Application/ Abstract: July 12, 2021

Notification of Application/ Abstracts Acceptance: July 15, 2021

Deadline for Submission of the Full Paper/ Presentation: July 23, 2021

Symposium Dates: July 28-29, 2021

APPLICATION PROCESS

Those interested in applying as Contributors may complete the application at the following link : <https://form.jotform.com/211684034610952>

Those interested in attending the symposium may register at the following link:
<https://form.jotform.com/211683201163041>

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SELECTION

**Selected contributors/participants and general attendees will receive an email confirmation with programme details. Only applicants selected will be contacted. The general information on selection results will be posted at ICYF and *Religions for Peace* websites and social media accounts.

CERTIFICATE

Contributors/participants and general attendees will be awarded a certificate issued by ICYF and *Religions for Peace*.

CONTACT

Should you have any questions, you may contact globalcommunication@icyforum.org (ICYF) or jobuya@rfp.org (*Religions for Peace*).