

EUROPEAN NETWORK ON RELIGION AND BELIEF (ENORB)

Building grassroots action on key priorities for combating discrimination and hate crime on Religion/Belief grounds (Project funded by Open Society Foundation)

Project Specification (Summary)

1. Purpose of Grant

To support campaigning action through seminars and meetings on the two key priority topics for anti-discrimination work identified by grassroots organisations of the ENORB network for 2014-5. In practice, these relate to conflictual issues in implementing equalities priorities between.

- Religious Symbols, dress, headwear in employment and public space
- Interface between LGBT rights and freedom of religion/belief

Key Activities will be:

- Two European seminars: topics (i) Religious Symbols and Dress, (ii) LGBT Rights and Religion/Belief
- At least 5 member state meetings to support local campaigns on key issues.

2. Deliverables

2.1 **Two European level seminars** involving participation from a wide range of member-state civil society organisations, with follow-up campaigning meetings in at least 5 member-states with local R&B networks/activists:

- A Joint Seminar of ENORB/ILGA-Europe on the Interface between Freedom of Religion and Belief and LGBT Rights

A seminar in Brussels for participants from ENORB and ILGA member organisations, equality bodies and EU/European institutions, with the aim of agreeing a joint public statement and programme of action.

- A Seminar on Religious Symbols, Dress, Headwear etc in the Public Space and Employment, to be organised jointly with R&B minority organisations

A public seminar in Brussels for participants from ENORB and ILGA member organisations, member state equality bodies and EU/European institutions, with a report setting out a campaigning position statement, which would be discussed with partner organisations from minority religions, the EP Freedom of Religion and Belief Group .

2.2. **At least 5 Campaigning Meetings/Seminars in member-states:** Events will be organised in selected member states where there is demand from participants in the European seminars, preferably on one of the key topics for this project, or on a topic which is of special interest in the member state .

NB. In most member states, there are no existing national Religion and Belief networks focusing on anti-discrimination and equalities work though most have at least one organisation (eg a national church or human rights group) which has an interest and experience in such work. The initial meetings planned under this programme will be designed to bring together, R&B organisations interested in ENORB activities, with a view to support the development of national networks.

3. Initial Planning for Implementation

3.1 European Seminars

A minimum of E500 would be necessary for basic costs for each European seminar.

i) **ENORB/ILGA Seminar.** Planning has already started for a date in early December, with the planning group having met after the AGM. The aim will be to employ a similar approach to the preliminary seminar in September 2013, but with a larger audience from both ILGA and ENORB. A meeting to finalise the date and prepare a draft programme is planned for Sept 16th.

ii) **Follow-up to Seminar on Religious symbols and clothing.** It was suggested that this would be more attractive to a wider audience if we placed this specific issue in the broader context of Human Rights and Religion and Belief. Also if we hope to attract high-level speakers, it would need a lot of preparation time – so probably in the summer of 2015.

3.2 Seminars in Member States

E250 should be available for each member state seminar, which should be organised by an ENORB officer in collaboration with a local organisation which has the capacity to organise a seminar and invite local participants. The E250 would also have to cover the costs of travel for the visiting ENORB officer. We are expected to deliver 5 seminars, which can be on one of our key topics, or on a topic of importance in the member state. For most countries, this would be their first ENORB meeting and would therefore include introductions, aims of ENORB and network, existing national R&B situation, and key discrimination/R&B priorities.

Initially we need to make decisions on location and timing.

- Definite opportunities for seminars exist in UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Romania, Berlin - and suggestions have also been made for France, Poland and Spain.
- Timing should be within the year from the award of grant – ie by April 2015.

3.3 UK ENORB initial planning schedule

UK Exec members held a preliminary discussion in July, and came up with the following components of a programme, which because of existing contacts could be done for minimal costs:

- i) Key Topic – Interface between LGBT Rights and R&B (religion and belief) freedom.
- ii) Preliminary inter-faith discussion – at a UK ENORB meeting.
- iii) Initiatives with the different religious groups
 - Initial seminar – In East London, in collaboration with the local Council of Mosques where we have good contacts through Abdullah
 - Further possibilities – with Christians – through Rev Sharon Ferguson, Sikhs – through Navleen or Harjinder’s contacts, maybe Buddhists – via Jamie.