

Engaging Our *Diversity* through *Interculturality*

Rome, March 19th 2018

Dear Sister,

On behalf of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), we are delighted to invite you to consider applying for the following **program on Interculturality**. The workshop will be held at the UISG facilities in Rome over the last two weeks of **January 2019**, but significant preparation will be required beforehand. The purpose of this program is to assist a religious congregation in engaging its cultural/ethnic/nationality diversity and moving closer to a fuller expression and experience of mutually-enriching interculturality both within the congregation and in its ministry/mission activity.

In the paragraphs below we offer a brief introduction and overview. The UISG program is designed to prepare a core team of four persons from each community to serve as the catalyst and resource to guide their community through this process. They in turn would be available as interculturality resources for other congregations in their regions. Spaces are limited (approximately 24 congregations) but if you sense this area is a need and desire for your congregation/institute, I invite and encourage you to apply.

Background:

Religious congregations/institutes, on the one hand, acknowledge the giftedness of their multiculturalism, but at the same time, they realize that they often do not achieve the ideals of true interculturality in their religious community life and their ministry contexts, due to misunderstanding, miscommunication, and unnamed prejudices. Regarding the former, acknowledging and engaging their cultural diversity would impact their understanding and practice of the following: vocation promotion, formation, community life, spirituality, leadership, and finances. Religious congregations have various levels of experience in responding to these challenges. However, many, if not most, religious congregations recognize the urgent need to develop more clearly and deeply their intercultural "Body of Christ."

Facing the challenges of this moment of multicultural transition is a key element and opportunity in the ongoing process of transforming the face of religious life around the world and of enriching and reviving the vision and practice of the charism of each religious congregation in a way that is appropriate and relevant today. This in turn can provide an even stronger prophetic vision for the Church and the broader society that the interaction and engagement of different cultures and nationalities can be an opportunity for mutual transformation and enrichment.

Appropriate preparation for this process, on the broader congregational level, requires providing the necessary knowledge and developing certain skills and behavior. However, this can only be accomplished if proceeded



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and accompanied by the necessary motivation, spirituality, and ongoing process of “conversion” of all forms of ethnocentrism (by all parties). The UISG program will provide a framework for training core teams to assist their congregations, and eventually other congregations, in moving toward these goals.

Timeline and Preparation for January 2019 Workshop:

- 1) A congregation completes and submits the application form through a link by May 1, 2018. A congregation will be notified of the receipt of the application.
- 2) Congregations will be formally notified of their acceptance into the UISG program by June 1, 2018.
- 3) If accepted, the congregations will submit the names, email addresses, and language proficiency of the four core team members by July 1, 2018.

The core team should consist of: one in leadership, one in formation ministry, two of the four under 50 years of age (if possible), and representatives of four different nationalities or cultures.

The core team members should have good language proficiency either in English, Italian, Spanish or French.

- 4) Instructions for completing a brief congregational case study and a description of the intercultural journey of one's congregation will be sent to the core team by July 1 and should be completed and returned by September 3, 2018.
- 5) Instructions for completing a short on-line “Intercultural Competency Scale” (ICS) tool and background materials will be sent to individual members of the core team by September 3, 2018, and should be completed by January 14, 2019. The results of the ICS are communicated confidentially only to the individual person.

Two-week Workshop:

- 1) The workshop will occur Monday through Friday over two weeks:

Week One: January 21-25, 2019

Week Two: January 28 to February 1, 2019

Beginning at 8:50 and ending by 17:15 every day

- 2) The event will be held at the UISG facilities in Piazza di Ponte Sant'Angelo, 28 – 00186 Roma, but no accommodation is available on-site
- 3) Each core team will need to make its own accommodation arrangements in its own house in Rome or through the hospitality of other congregations. UISG can help this process if needed.
- 4) The program will include input by international experts in interculturality, table discussion, story-telling, prayer and Eucharist, work time for core teams, and social moments.
- 5) There will be simultaneous translation into **English, Italian, Spanish and French.**



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Costs:

Registration fee is 625,00 € per person. We are currently seeking sponsorship of the programme so that the cost may be lower. Registration includes program materials, lunches, coffee breaks and receptions, excluding accommodation.

Once a Congregation is notified that the core team is accepted, a deposit will be requested to confirm participation.

As a reminder the Application form can be found online clicking [here](#), and it must be submitted by May 1, 2018.

If you have any questions, please email UISG at ufficio.segreteria@uisg.org and/or phone at 0039 06 68400238.

Thank you for considering this timely opportunity for addressing a crucial area of religious life today!

With gratitude and shalom,

The Coordination Team

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