

Dear Friends and Colleagues of the IIPE and the Peace Education Center,

I'm writing to you today seeking your support for an important new initiative of the Peace Education Center (TCPEC) and the International Institute on Peace Education (IIPE). We are planning a tremendous undertaking that will a) broaden the vision and scope of the IIPE, b) significantly increase its constituency, c) provide greater outreach and training in peace education, and d) further support and complement other global peace education initiatives such as the Global Campaign for Peace Education.

A Renewed Sense of Purpose and a Broader Vision

The annual IIPE is built upon two important and inseparable guiding concepts: cooperative learning and community. As a short term learning community, the IIPE has brought together educators and professionals from around the world to learn with and from each other in a community of learners. In the process, the IIPE has inspired many participants to develop their own local initiatives.

Several requests have been made for additional IIPE offerings and perhaps for an annual institute in the US. We have long agreed that support and activities need to be extended beyond the annual IIPE to serve the growing demand for the type of learning that the Institute offers for educators from all levels of society, including those practicing in non-formal and informal contexts.

There currently exist a large number of internationally comprised organizations of peace education practitioners, academics and advocates but little organization exists that addresses the needs of peace educators at the local level. There are practitioners of peace education in nearly every community around the world – however, local support networks barely exist. Furthermore, the existing international activities and training possibilities in peace education rarely reflect local needs and relevant practices.

CIPE: Extending the IIPE Community

To address these local needs the TCPEC proposes to extend the IIPE community through the creation and coordination of locally based mini institutes (1-2 days) built upon the current IIPE program model. The workshops and plenaries of the IIPE program have always been comprised of and conducted by IIPE participants. These mini IIPEs, with a working title of “Community Institutes on Peace Education – CIPE,” would be organized by former hosts and participants of the IIPE in their local communities. The program will be comprised of interactive plenaries, workshops, and reflection groups addressing locally relevant issues and concerns of peace educators.

Foundations for a New Social Movement: Addressing Local and Global Needs

The CIPEs have been conceived to address long unattended challenges to the development and dissemination of the field of peace education, including:

- Providing local support for peace educators. There are educators practicing peace education in nearly every corner of the world, yet we know little of the existence of each other and the work that we are doing. The IIPE has brought together people in solidarity from around the world, but little has been done to bring people together at the local level.
- Learning from each other about best practices. The IIPE community is itself its greatest intellectual and practical resource. A world of experts exists amongst the daily practitioners of peace education. As a community of learners we have much to learn from and with each other.
- Addressing current and relevant local content and issues. The annual IIPE is designed to address contextually relevant peace issues and obstacles of the host region. However, every community has its own distinct culture and history, and what might be relevant to one might not be as relevant to another. At the community level the CIPE can be developed to address the most pertinent and relevant issues toward instituting educational change.

- Supporting school and community based peace education initiatives. The TCPEC and the IPE receive numerous requests for supporting emerging peace education programs and initiatives around the world. In many instances, the local community can be better equipped to provide this support. The CIPEs will aid in providing grassroots support with the benefit of being connected to an extensive global community and the IPE.
- Increasing the possibility for affecting policy locally, nationally, and globally. Any effective strategy for change or social transformation needs to involve actors at all levels of society. It is not enough to only outreach to policymakers and power-holders. Formal and non-formal educators need to be involved in the process of educational change as they are the most active participants and its greatest stakeholders. Working together they can better show evidence of the need and potential for peace education.
- Increased potential for research and new developments in the field of peace education. We are little aware of the diversity of approaches and practices of peace education that exist in the world. We are even less aware of the success stories of peace education. The CIPE will bring the global community closer together through extending networking and sharing.

Providing Support: A Virtual Community

The TCPEC would provide support for this movement by coordinating a virtual community through an interactive website that will include a calendar of events, reports of institutes, workshop outlines for adaptation (a new effort at sharing contextually relevant examples of curriculum in peace education), plenary presentations, best papers and practices from emerging educators, and a special monthly essay section (1000 words max). This web-based initiative will aid the CIPEs in connecting to global initiatives and developments in peace education.

All this shapes up into more of a **social movement** than a one-time, stand-alone education experience. It warmly wraps together the best of the IPE – **community and cooperation** – into a package more suitable to support its constituents and promote social transformation directed toward the reduction and elimination of all forms of direct and indirect violence.

The Potential and What it Involves

The potential for the CIPEs is immense. More than 1000 people have participated in the IPE in the past 25 years – and an initial survey indicates a strong possibility that a minimum of 12 CIPEs could be conducted in the first year. It is expected that these mini IPEs could grow exponentially each year.

The costs for hosting and organizing a CIPE are minimal, and any funds necessary could be easily supported by the participants. The TCPEC is in the process of developing an organizers manual for making the planning as easy and smooth as possible. At this summer's IPE in Costa Rica we will be formally launching the initiative and will offer workshops for those that are interested in hosting CIPEs.

We NEED your Support

The TCPEC/IPE is in the process of applying for grants to support the CIPE. Strong funding is important to ensure that this initiative can get off the ground. For the past 24 years the IPE has been coordinated and developed by a committed cadre of volunteers, never has anyone been paid to promote this work. With this proposed increase in scope, the IPE/CIPE will become a full-time effort, requiring even greater dedication and increased support. Funds will be needed to support staff, develop planning and training manuals, to coordinate events, and to keep up with the demands of the community and the web-based network.

We are also seeking funds to support the organizing of CIPEs around the world. Should our fundraising meet its ambitious goals we would like to offer small awards of around \$500 US Dollars toward the planning and organizing of the first 50 CIPEs to be hosted in different countries around the world.

How YOU can HELP

We could use your help in any of the following ways:

- To support our fundraising efforts we are hoping to show strong interest for the hosting of CIPEs around the world. We would like to include in our grant applications a strong and diverse list of committed names and organizations who are interested in hosting a CIPE over the next few years. If you are interested we would appreciate it if you could send us your name, affiliation, and address (city, country) to be included in this list.

- We are also in the process of putting together a global advisory board to support the IPE/CIPE. It would be a great honor to have all former IPE hosts be a part of this advisory group. We will also accept former participants. Our goal is to have a globally diverse and regionally representative board that can support the decision making process as well as facilitate regional support and networking tasks. If you are interested, again please send us your name and affiliation. We will contact individuals about participation on the advisory board once we have a better sense of interest.
- Finally, we would appreciate any fundraising assistance or contacts you might have to make this vision a possibility.

The vision of the CIPE/IPE is dependent upon the community that comprises it. The success of the IPE has never been about the talent or commitment of its organizers. It has always been about the commitment of the participants to learning with and from each other in a spirit of community and solidarity. We hope you will join us in making this vision a reality.

In peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Jenkins', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Tony Jenkins
General Coordinator
International Institute on Peace Education

PS: Applications for IPE 2006 will be available shortly!

PPS: The IPE will be 25 years old in 2007! Keep your eyes open for notice of a very special event early in the year.