

Terms of Reference

Study Tour to Germany (Marburg) for young activists and representatives of the State Agency on Youth and Sport Affairs of Kyrgyzstan

1. Background and Rationale

Of the former Soviet republics in Central Asia, the Kyrgyz Republic is struggling to provide a stable and secure environment for growth and development and large sections of the population are responding by opting for alternatives to ensure their security. The most common survival strategies for these communities include emigration and seasonal migration. However, there is evidence that some community members (including young people) are looking to other groups, including religious, ethno-nationalist, even criminal and violent for value systems, provision of services, and opportunities. For example, in the Ferghana Valley, the daily issues that people face are most often linked to socio-economic problems related to isolation and disputed borders. Ethnic and religious identities and difference, perspectives and values are exacerbated and brought to the fore by competition for scarce resources and education and employment opportunities and often result in mutual suspicion, displays of intolerance and disrespect and violent clashes, particularly between young people.

All of these dynamics impact on youth's participation in decision-making and contribution to peace and stability in their communities. As such, there is a need to bridge the divides between young women and men from different social, ethnic, regional and religious lines, and support youth to safely identify and articulate their security needs and effectively participate in peacebuilding and civic/political processes to affect change. As observed through Saferworld's existing research, programming, policy and advocacy initiatives in Kyrgyzstan and other fragile and conflict-affected contexts, these demands are coming from young women and men themselves, and are crucial for building a more peaceful, just and inclusive society in Kyrgyzstan.

Our programme has demonstrated the need to further develop and strengthen young people's potential to create change by supporting and funding creative and responsive activities that respond to their specific needs and put them in the driving seat. The study tour for young leaders and representatives from the Kyrgyz Republic State Agency on Youth and Sport Affairs (SAYSA), to be held in Marburg Germany, will enable them to exchange experiences and learn from each other, as well as with youth and local officials in Marburg. With its ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse population, vibrant civil society (including several Islamic and ethnic minority cultural associations) and developed municipal youth work structures, Marburg is an excellent example for a city of intercultural tolerance and peace, as well as youth participation in public life both in Germany and Western Europe. The Centre for Conflict Studies at the University of Marburg further presents a hub for excellent research and knowledge transfer between theory and practices of peace- and tolerance-building.

Based on the exchange and discussion with various actors and institutions, the young participants of the study tour will bring back to their peers, communities, civil society organisations (CSOs) and authorities best practices that support youth-specific policy-making and programming.

2. Project overview

Saferworld Kyrgyzstan has been working with the CSO, Foundation for Tolerance International (FTI) since 2012. In 2017, we embarked on a new project to promote greater cooperation between youth from diverse backgrounds to overcome divisions and learn about tolerance. Funded by the European Union (EU), the project supports diverse young people from across southern Kyrgyzstan to come together to discuss their ideas about religion and democracy, and to take action to shape public opinion and government responses.

The project promotes inclusion, tolerance and respect for diversity and aims to create greater understanding between youth from different backgrounds.

Together with our partner FTI, Saferworld is implementing the following activities through this project:

- providing trainings for young people and women leaders to learn about democracy and civic participation, with a focus on diversity of religions and cultures, community security and democracy;
- helping young people and women leaders to implement initiatives that tackle issues that are important to them;
- conducting research into youth perspectives on what drives division and intolerance in Kyrgyzstan, and what they believe leads to extremist viewpoints among their peers, which will provide recommendations on how to improve social cohesion;
- cooperating with parliamentarians, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Mol), and the SAYSA to conduct an informational campaign about tolerance, drawing on the results of the study;
- actively involving local authorities, youth committees, local crime prevention centres (LCPCs), police and other civil society actors to collaborate with young people as they participate in civic initiatives;
- working with journalists, bloggers and public relations specialists on how to be sensitive to security issues when reporting in the media – including when reporting on topics related to intolerant and divisive rhetoric.

3. Purpose and expected results of the study tour

Saferworld Kyrgyzstan, within the project “Young Delegates of Tolerance and Democracy”, plans to organise a study tour to Germany, to the city of Marburg, where Kyrgyzstani youth can gain a better understanding of, exchange experience with, and learn best practices from with the city’s officials and children and youth parliament on tolerance promotion, peacebuilding, conflict resolution and youth participation in policy-making and decision-making processes. From Saferworld’s previous experience, we have observed that experience exchanges and study tours are beneficial methods to foster deep and sustainable learning.

The purpose of the study tour is to enable participants to share experiences, best practices and lessons learned of successful approaches to better understanding of negative effects of divisive rhetoric among youth and wider communities. The expected results of the study tour include:

- **Youth** – to learn about best practices of tolerance promotion, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution and mediation in the Center for Conflict Studies of the University of Marburg, meet with children and youth parliament and local officials in order to exchange experience on youth initiatives and participation in decision making. After returning, we expect youth leaders to share their acquired knowledge and skills with peers from their communities.
- **Representatives from the SAYSA**– to learn and share experience on involving youth in decision-making processes; and to meet with local officials and youth partnership initiative groups to observe new ways to address problems related to lack of engagement with youth, youth support for violent groups, and lack of youth participation.
- **Saferworld and FTI** – to learn about sustainability aspects of youth policies, programmes and initiatives implemented by youth, local officials and educational institutions in order to improve existing youth projects and develop new ones.

4. Methods

- a. Work with a hired consultant to jointly organise the study tour, including developing the programme agenda, coordinating logistics, arranging meetings and site visits in Germany, facilitating daily debriefs with study tour participants, and providing other support required for a successful visit.
- b. Prepare an activity report on the study tour.

5. Deliverables

The study tour will deliver the following outputs:

Description	Timeframe*	Responsible
Detailed programme** of the study tour with confirmed meetings with various actors and institutions	By 26 April	External Consultant
Five-day study tour for 20 participants (ca. 10 male and 10 female, including two from SAYSA), 2 Saferworld staff, 3 FTI staff (including one translator) Total:25 people	22-27 June (including two days travel time and one day for cultural event)	Saferworld Project Manager, External Consultant, supported by local volunteers and translator
Report after study tour (max 10 pages)	By 10 July	External Consultant

*This is a preliminary timeframe and could change.

** A 4-5 day programme that will include but not be limited to exploring sustainable youth initiatives, and exchange of experience in building interethnic, intercultural and interreligious tolerance, as well as conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The group should also have meetings with Marburg city and district youth parliament members, student parliament, and the Mayor's city administration in order to learn about youth participation in policy- and decision-making processes.

6. Participant selection process

A total of 25 people will take part in the study tour to Germany (18 young activists, two representatives from the SAYSA and five staff from Saferworld and FTI). Youth participants will be selected by Saferworld and FTI based on their participation in project initiatives and activities.

Two representative from Saferworld, Kyrgyzstan and three FTI will join the study tour both to support programme participants with language, learning and logistics, and to learn about youth-related work.

7. Logistics

The logistics for the study tour will be co-organised by Saferworld Kyrgyzstan and the hired consultant. Saferworld Kyrgyzstan will support the participants with return air tickets, Schengen visas, and travel/medical insurance.

8. Qualification requirements

Saferworld is seeking to hire an external consultant for up to 10 days to coordinate the study tour programme in Marburg, Germany. Applications should have the following skills and qualifications:

- Fluency in English and German, and working knowledge of Russian;
- University degree in peace and conflict studies, or other social sciences, or related practical experience;
- Excellent knowledge of and relationships with Marburg institutions working on peace, conflict and security and youth initiatives and local authorities working with youth;
- Desirable knowledge and skills of interactive teaching and facilitation methods;
- Willingness to perform work in accordance with the requirements of the technical specifications

Interested parties are required to send a brief expression of interest, CV, sample of the proposed study tour programme and a financial proposal (maximum amount is EUR 1500), by **April 10, 2019** to the following email address: jobs@saferworld.org.uk