



**For Immediate Release**

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**THE DORIS DUKE FOUNDATION FOR ISLAMIC ART'S BUILDING BRIDGES PROGRAM AWARDS MORE THAN \$1.6 MILLION IN GRANTS AS PART OF ITS FIRST FUNDING COMPETITION**

**Eight U.S. Organizations Receive Support to Plan or Implement Cultural Programs Intended to Increase Public Understanding of Contemporary Muslim Societies**

**NEW YORK, NY, February 7, 2014** — The Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art (DDFIA) announced today that it is awarding eight U.S. nonprofit organizations a total of \$1,604,530 in grants as a result of the Building Bridges Program's first-ever funding competition. In the past, the Building Bridges Program has only awarded grants through a curatorial approach or through intermediary organizations. As part of the 2013-2014 grant competition, DDFIA, which is an operating foundation of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, is providing the grantees with support to plan and implement arts-focused projects intended to increase public understanding of contemporary Muslim cultures and societies.

"We are delighted that this set of grants will support work that engages communities across the country through the powerful medium of the arts," said Zeyba Rahman, Senior Program Officer of the DDFIA Building Bridges Program. "Through these creative initiatives, the public will have new opportunities to build experience with and knowledge of the rich diversity in Muslim societies. We offer our congratulations to all the grant recipients as they move forward to realize their projects."

The Building Bridges 2013-2014 competition sought arts-focused projects that create participatory, collaborative and/or interactive experiences tailored to engage target audiences in the United States. A panel of external experts reviewed the applications and chose eight projects from a total of 56 submissions.

The grant recipients and their respective projects and grant amounts are:

- **Al-Bustan Seeds of Culture** in Philadelphia, PA will receive \$120,000 to further develop the Arab Music Concert Series, which features internationally acclaimed Middle Eastern guest artists collaborating with Al-Bustan Takht Ensemble for residency activities that include rehearsals, workshops and demonstrations, and culminate with concert performances in Philadelphia.
- **America Abroad Media** in Washington, DC will receive \$276,997 to launch a two-year project entitled "Reflections on Muslim Culture in a Changing World," a public media series which will be distributed through radio and television partners.
- **Center for Asian American Media** in San Francisco, CA will receive \$207,533 to launch a three-year series of hands-on national filmmaking programs, consisting of workshops for Muslim youth designed to encourage them to develop their own compelling stories using technology.
- **Children's Museum of Manhattan** in New York, NY will receive \$250,000 to develop "Muslim Cultures: An Art and Media Experience for Families," a two-year initiative consisting of a variety of

multi-disciplinary, interactive educational programs that aim to engage children and their caregivers.

- **La Mama Experimental Theatre Club** in New York, NY will receive \$50,000 to create a one-year project titled, “The Back Room @CultureHub,” a multipart series seeking to develop a dialogue between the public and emerging visual, new media and performance artists from Iran.
- **Metropolitan Museum of Art** in New York, NY will receive \$300,000 to develop educational programs for museum goers in connection with planned exhibitions involving Muslim cultures over a three-year period.
- **Old Town School of Folk Music** in Chicago, IL will receive \$275,000 to develop “Ojala! Presenting Muslim Voices & Connecting Diverse Communities,” a three-year project in partnership with the Inner-City Muslim Action Network to engage a range of Chicago-based communities through residency activities and musical performances by Muslim artists.
- **Poets House** in New York, NY will receive \$125,000 to build on its ongoing series of musical and performance programs with a two-year initiative that focuses on poetic voices of the Muslim word, adding four new cities to its six-city tour designed to reach new audiences.

Since 2007, the Building Bridges Program has supported efforts to increase the public’s familiarity with and understanding of contemporary Muslim cultures through arts and media programming. Muslims number approximately 1.6 billion people around the world, including approximately five million people in the United States. A 2009 Gallup study showed that 63 percent of Americans know very little or nothing about Islam, and 2010 Pew Report stated that 59 percent of Americans do not have any Muslim acquaintances. Despite having little knowledge about or interaction with Muslims, the study showed that 65 percent of Americans say that they have a very unfavorable or somewhat unfavorable view of Islam and Muslims. The Building Bridges Program supports grantees using the arts as a medium for increasing awareness and thereby understanding of the richness and diversity of Muslim cultures and the societies from which they emanate.

#### **About the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art**

The Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art (DDFIA) is an operating foundation funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. The mission of DDFIA is to improve the quality of people’s lives through the study, understanding and appreciation of Islamic arts and cultures. Based in New York, the Building Bridges Program is a grant-making program of the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art and supports national efforts that use the arts to increase the public’s understanding of contemporary Muslim societies. [www.ddcf.org/programs/building-bridges](http://www.ddcf.org/programs/building-bridges).

#### **About the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is to improve the quality of people’s lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and child well-being, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke’s properties. The Arts Program focuses its support on contemporary dance, jazz and theatre artists, and the organizations that nurture, present and produce them. For more information, please visit [www.ddcf.org](http://www.ddcf.org).