

# WORLD AWARE EDUCATION AWARDS



**Recognising excellence in partnership, networking and coordination  
for increased and improved global education**

**WORLD AWARE EDUCATION AWARDS**

## APPLICATION FORM

### 1. NAME OF THE PROJECT

Forgotten Diaries (FD)

### 2. BRIEF SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

'Forgotten Diaries' is a long-term initiative with a one-year pilot project, and its objectives are as follow:

- Select young people aged 15-29 from each of ten of the most pressing conflict zones, making sure to represent a variety of points of view, backgrounds, ethnicities and gender balance, and offer them a one-month online training course on basic reporting techniques and on the ICTs and tools to be used throughout the project (blogs, podcasts, videos and other), releasing a certificate at the end of it. Two more trainings are offered on "Project Management and Leadership Skills" and "Story Telling".
- Develop a website which will be used as a unique tool through which the neglected voices of youth in conflict zones will be heard by the global audiences and interested parties in the media and online. Focused campaigns and advocacy efforts will then contribute to make these intercultural exchanges and youth-led program known through the media, with preference to the online community.
- Promote the exchange of perspectives among participants (from within the same country and among all the countries involved) through their weekly blogs, posts, videos, interviews and photos, with a view to foster long-term intercultural dialogue and an enhanced understanding of different backgrounds and experiences of conflicts
- Engage the global audience – young people and adult alike - in an ongoing dialogue with participants about their perspectives and the conflicts they live in through blogs and forums, encouraging them to contribute to the project by also taking part in campaigns, advocacy efforts and contributing their time and skills in different fields. The global audience also have the opportunity to volunteer in assisting youth projects in conflict zones and in advocacy efforts.

### 3. WHAT IS THE NORTH-SOUTH/ GLOBAL DIMENSION OF YOUR PROJECT? Please describe

The Forgotten Diaries Project is a unique opportunity for young people from different conflict zones of the world (mostly Africa, Kosovo, etc.) to report on their daily lives and make their voice heard via an

especially dedicated platform for the exchange of information and analysis of critical situations which may also be of a danger to the future of humanity in case of a lack of cooperation in the field.

But the project also brings people together creating a platform for cooperation in facing the issues of common concern via promotion of ongoing dialogues between young people from different sides of the world as well as the global audience and fostering long-term intercultural dialogue.

The project participants try to engage their peers and the global audience into concrete actions and educate them about unreported and underreported conflicts, crisis and issues they are concerned with expressing their right to peace, sustainable development and a better future and creating a lasting and meaningful change at different levels.

As a matter of fact, the Forgotten Diaries project creates a fruitful platform to promote peaceful coexistence, uncover human rights violations and spread democratic values and respect for human rights as a global dimension of its mission, coupled also with concrete projects on the ground.

#### **4. PARTNER ORGANISATIONS**

##### a) LEAD PARTNER

Name: Youth Action for Change (YAC)

Contact details: Ms. Selene Biffi at [selene@youthactionforchange.org](mailto:selene@youthactionforchange.org)  
Via Curiel 63, 20050 Mezzago (MI), Italy

Type of Organisation: youth-led, non-profit organisation

##### b) PARTNER 2

Name: Oxfam OIYP

Contact details: Ms. Amy Berson at [amyb@oxfam.org.au](mailto:amyb@oxfam.org.au)  
Oxfam International Youth Partnerships  
PO Box 1711, Strawberry Hills  
Sydney NSW 2012, Australia

Type of Organisation: NGO

##### c) OTHER PARTNERS

Name: VITA Europe

Contact details: via Marco D'Agrate 43, 20139 Milan, Italy

Type of Organisation: Media

Name: Chechnya Advocacy Network

Contact details: Ms. Almut Rochowansky at [almut@chechnyaadvocacy.org](mailto:almut@chechnyaadvocacy.org)

Type of Organisation: NGO

**We have also established project-based partnership with the Pulitzer Centre on Crisis Reporting, USA (for an online course on Media and Journalism) and offered an activity held by Zlata Filipovic (Bosnia Herzegovina/Ireland), one of the main inspirers behind FD, along with Anna Frank.**

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### 5. PLEASE OUTLINE BRIEFLY THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT<sup>1</sup>:

#### a) overall aims

Children are amongst the first casualties of any armed conflict, the most vulnerable and innocent of victims. In the last decade alone 1.5 million children have died in wars; four million have been disabled and a further 10 million traumatized.

Children in war zones have to cope with very difficult circumstances. Not only do they suffer physical wounds, hunger and malnutrition but they also have problems with recurring nightmares, sleep disorders, depression, explosions of anger or anguish, concentration problems, and many more. Many are very sombre about their future as they feel that a future is not guaranteed. Forgotten Diaries is an initiative which will allow these children to keep in contact with the external world, communicating about their experiences, fears and dreams. It is a unique opportunity for their voice to be heard.

We strongly believe that Forgotten Diaries, together with local grass roots organizations' initiatives (of which we are not responsible), through both short-term emergency relief and long-term rehabilitation programs, will help improve the living conditions of war-affected children and young people.

With this initiative we will address three main opportunities:

- Giving children and young people the opportunity and the tools to report on their daily lives and the conflict they live in
- Educate the global audience about unreported and underreported conflicts, crisis and issues while giving them a chance to get involved through a host of activities (campaigns, advocacy efforts and fundraising)
- Encourage the implementation of youth-led, on-the-ground activities in the countries and communities targeted by 'Forgotten Diaries' (now ongoing in the Niger Delta, Turkey, Kosovo, Uganda and Ethiopia)

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<sup>1</sup> Please feel free to use existing documentation in response to Part 5 of the application form.

## **b) specific objectives**

There are now over 100 ongoing conflicts and crisis in world, and despite the fact that some of these have been going on for over ten years and have claimed several thousands lives, they have received very little coverage by mainstream media (over 25 years in Sri Lanka & 40 in Colombia, for example). Thus has made them, de facto, shunned by the international community at large and are referred to as 'forgotten conflicts'.

Several millions children and young people are confronted daily with war, and have no chance to tell the outer world about their lives, hopes and expectations, nor the way they perceive conflicts and their struggle to survive.

To continue the long-standing tradition of young people keeping a diary of their lives and their struggles in conflicts (as much as those of Anne Frank and Zlata Filipovic), the internationally acclaimed organisation, Youth Action for Change (YAC) will offer them a platform through this project to voice their thoughts, feelings and hopes and promote ongoing dialogues between young people from all sides of the identified conflicts as well as the global audience.

Our main target is children and young people living in conflict and post conflict areas, aged 15-29. We have identified then ten most neglected conflicts and crisis worldwide: Kosovo, Chechnya, Kurdistan, East Timor, Caucasus, Ethiopia, India & Pakistan, Niger & Niger delta, Sri Lanka, Uganda. We have chosen five young people per conflict area to be our reporter on the field.

Other than young people and youth-led organisations coming from neglected conflict and post-conflict areas, we also aim to inspire and involve the global audience, both young and adult alike.

## **c) outcomes**

'Forgotten Diaries' is a long-term initiative initiated through a one-year pilot project started in July 2008. Forgotten Diaries is an online initiative which aims at shedding light on the most unreported and underreported conflicts, crisis and issues by involving those most affected by these: children and young people.

Forgotten Diaries is the first project of its kind, striving to bring attention to youth in conflict zones and pioneering the use of a range of 'new media', creative technologies and techniques to train and empower young people in conflict zones with the ability to share their stories with the world. It also support young people coming from this areas with the skills and tools they need to implement local project so as to actively contribute to peace and justice within their own communities.

In it's short life, Forgotten Diaries has already won numerous awards and received international press coverage. Some of its key achievements to date include:

- Over 20,000 hits to date (global audience)
- Media Coverage: TG5, Sole24Ore, Rai International, Il Giorno, Corriere della Sera (Italy) and SKY TV, WIRED, the UN and others (International) for a total of 59 articles and interviews (radio, press and tv) in 2009 alone
- Partnerships: established with Oxfam OIYP · Grant from ArtAction, an art foundation based in Singapore
- Awards: 'Econtent Award Italy 2008', Politecnico di Milano, Takunda Award as 'Best Humanitarian Project of 2009', CESVI and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Official endorsement of the Italian Ministry of Youth

- Due to its unique, innovative and inspiring approach, 'Forgotten Diaries' has already received endorsements, support or expressions of interest from numerous people and organizations including:

Oxfam OIYP  
Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting  
Mr. Kevin Sites – Former CNN and NBC war correspondent and instigator of the 'In the Hot Zone' feature on Yahoo!  
Mr. Charles London - Writer, author of 'One Day the Soldiers Came'

Forgotten Diaries is now helping participants in designing and implementing local development projects aiming at building peace. Some examples include the creation of peace clubs to train children and teenagers in schools in Ethiopia and mobilize women and young people to take part in the current peace talks in Northern Uganda.

#### **d) duration of the project**

June 2008 – Ongoing

#### **e) participation of the target group(s) in the design and implementation of the project**

FD is a youth-led project and involves a range of stakeholders including professionals and young people.

**Young People:** Youth are directly involved and the main focus of the project. FD aims to raise awareness of those most directly and heavily affected by forgotten conflict zones, youth.

FD directly engages over 40 youth from a selection of 10 forgotten conflict zones at present, providing training for them and resources and support including funding opportunities for community projects they can choose to start. The 40+ youth blog regularly on the FD website, allowing a global audience to gain a unique perspective into the lives of youth in conflict zones and the challenges they face. However, FD presents a much more positive image. Many of the participants are community youth leaders and some have engaged in starting their own community projects with the help of FD, all which is also displayed on the website for the international audience to learn about. Furthermore, FD is completely run and was designed by a team of young volunteers from around the world.

**Professionals:** FD involves a number of professionals as well. Firstly FD was fortunate to engage Mr. Kevin Sites a former CNN conflicts reporter and the Author of "In the Hot Zone" as a key mentor for the project. Furthermore, FD has run three skills training sessions for its participants, each which have been run by professionals in the respective fields of the training. FD is currently working on shooting a brief documentary on youth in conflict zones which will directly engage many of its participants and which will be made by film professionals.

**Other Stakeholders:** FD has engaged with numerous journalists and media representatives over the past year appearing in over 50 articles around the world. Furthermore, FD has also worked with numerous other NGOs and international organisations. For example FD worked together with Oxfam to run one training course in 2008. FD also uncovered accounts of human rights violations in one of the conflict zones surveyed and worked with a United Nations' agency to bring attention to the issue.

## **f) strategies for integrating learning from the project into the educational system (formal and non-formal)**

FD improves the education of young people in numerous ways.

Firstly, one of the key objectives of FD is to help young people in forgotten conflict zones connect with one another, sharing stories and experiences and helping one another overcome the challenges they face.

Secondly, FD provides training to young people in conflict zones. Since its inception, in June 2008, FD have run courses online for its youth participants on online media, community project development and storytelling through photography. These courses were designed to help the participants reach out to the world and share their perspectives and stories of life in conflict zones, while also teaching them how to start and run small community projects to help their peers. Several projects have been started since, including a "sports for peace" project in Nigeria where an FD participant is using sport to bring youth together and teach them to play peacefully. Through this model, FD achieves a leveraged impact as its participants use their new found skills to train others in their community.

Finally, FD has brought increased attention and awareness about the plight of youth in forgotten conflict zones to the rest of the world. With thousands of mostly young people visiting the website, reading about the conflicts and reading the personal blogs of the participants, many have learnt about forgotten conflict zones and development issues.

## **g) evaluation mechanisms (internal and/or external)**

'Forgotten Diaries' is an ongoing initiative with a one-year pilot phase, the first evaluation was carried out halfway through it (after the first six months), while the final one is expected for December 2009. To assess the impact of 'Forgotten Diaries' and the outcomes of it, we use the following indicators:

### **1. STAKEHOLDERS**

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

- Number of participants
- Gender balance
- Different backgrounds, perspectives and ethnicities
- Conflicts or crisis areas covered
- Skills and competencies acquired after the two online training courses
- Number and quality of blog posts, pictures, videos and interviews

#### **LOCAL NGOS and OTHER PARTNER ORGANISATIONS**

- Number of organisations involved
- Geographic scope represented
- Social, Political, Economic and Ethnic backgrounds represented
- Quality and diversity of services offered to local communities
- Involvement with 'Forgotten Diaries' and the support provided to our participants (venue, tools and other as needed)
- Involvement and mentoring to activities on the ground initiated by our participants
- Ongoing communication and support with YAC staff

#### **GLOBAL AUDIENCE**

- Number of individuals involved (those who sign up to our newsletter)

- Number of people volunteering their time and skills toward 'Forgotten Diaries' or projects on the ground
- Number of comments on blogs and forum

## 2. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITIES ON THE GROUND

- Number of activities designed and implemented by participants in their local communities
- Issues addressed (Human Rights, Environment...)
- Duration of the activities and possible replication
- Number of other young people empowered by the activities
- Venue where the activities were delivered
- Impact on their local communities
- Comments and suggestions by community members and other local stakeholders

### WEBSITE

- Number of total viewers a month
- Polls data
- Comments left by viewers on blogs and forum
- Graphic quality
- Quality of the information provided

### CAMPAIGNS and ADVOCACY

- Number and quality of the actions undertaken
- Number of emails and petitions signed and sent through our website
- Coverage of 'Forgotten Diaries' in mainstream media
- Local outcomes of our campaigns in the targeted countries

## **h) budget – details of financial sources and summary of income and expenditure**

Forgotten Diaries is still a relatively new project currently in a trial 'pilot' phase of operation. The project commenced in June 2008. The project has relied on one grant to date from a non-profit organisation Art Action to the value of \$US12,600. Being a web-based project, majority of the costs incurred to date have been centred on the technology aspects of the project including web development. The majority of the funds awarded under the Art Action grant have been used for funding grass roots projects initiated by the project's participants (10%), funding development of a photo gallery for the website (8%), staff (20%), and the production of a documentary aimed at raising awareness of the positive effects of the projects undertaken by the participants and grass roots level community developments in conflict zones (30%+ forthcoming).

## **6. DESCRIBE HOW NETWORKING, PARTNERSHIP OR CO-ORDINATION WORKS IN THE PROJECT TO ENHANCE EFFECTIVENESS**

In essence, the entire project model for Forgotten Diaries is designed around a framework of networking and partnerships.

Forgotten Diaries brings together young people from forgotten conflict zones around the world, allowing them to share their stories and aspirations with youth living around the world. Young people from anywhere can view the stories, and blogs posted by the project's participants from conflict zones and interact with them through posting comments and asking questions. This facilitates an interactive form of learning.

As a result, Forgotten Diaries tends to operate like a network, linking youth from around the world to young people in forgotten conflict zones so that they can learn about these zones, and the plight of youth in them.

Partnerships are also very important to Forgotten Diaries. Forgotten Diaries recognises that there are many specialised organisations serving various needs and seeks to partner with many other organisations to improve the effectiveness of its projects. For example, the project partnered with Oxfam last year for a training program on project management for its participants. Furthermore, the project partnered with the Pulitzer Centre for participants to have the opportunity to interact with experts in the field and this year partnered with an independent photo-journalist for participants to learn new journalism skills which they can use to convey their stories educating the global audience.

## **7. WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LEARNING DIMENSION OF THE PROJECT THAT COULD BE USEFUL IN OTHER COUNTRIES?**

There are two key fronts along which others can learn from this project.

The first front involves learning about the issues this project aims to raise awareness of. This includes learning about forgotten conflict zones, learning about the lives of youth in these areas, the backgrounds of the conflict, the progress, and also how to support communities there. Furthermore, FD showcases many positive examples of youth who are, despite the hardships they face, still striving to make a difference and help their communities through the enactment of community projects. Rather than portraying youth as victims, FD showcases youth as catalysts for change and as a significant asset for community development. Overall Forgotten Diaries aspires to create a more informed global community, and one which can empathise with the numerous conflict zones and sympathise with policy involved at helping those affected by such zones.

The second front along which others can learn from this project is through sheer power of ICTs. FD has demonstrated a unique model for using ICTs to empower youth, link young people across the world, and raise awareness of issues not covered by the media, and most importantly inspire grass roots community development. Furthermore, professionals and non-profit organisations also may be able to learn valuable lessons from FD. They may be able to observe our low-cost model and the way we were able to achieve grass roots action on a very large scale through our online platform and management model.



Mezzago, September 9<sup>th</sup> 2009

Signature of the responsible applicant

Date and place