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| **Proposal Title** | **Countering the anti-migrant rhetoric and toxic narratives surrounding  migration in Europe** |
| **Reserve Fund** | Europe Reserve Fund |
| **Amount Requested** | USD 600,000 |
| **Unforeseen Need (250 words)** | The debate around migration in Europe has become increasingly anti-migrant both at the political and public level.  In 2015, the high number of refugee arrivals and the terrorist attacks in Paris in November, have eroded much of the sympathy towards refugees that was present earlier that year.  Right wing populist politicians capitalize on the rising fears and growing animosity towards migrants. While Germany started in mid-2015 with a widespread welcoming attitude towards refugees, by now general sentiment leans towards closure of borders. According to ZDF Politbarometer 58% of Germans said to be in favor of border controls, even if it would affect the economy and tourism.  Violent attacks on refugee shelters and anti-refugee street mobs are becoming daily news in the country. In 2015, 1600 crimes against refugees were registered –double the number of 2014.  Sweden, the other traditional stronghold of solidarity towards refugees, is facing similar challenges. Sweden Democrats (SD), nationalist party which rallies with anti-refugee slogans has seen its support base expanding and becoming the third biggest party by now. Violent attacks against refugee shelters are on the rise.  Paradoxically anti-migrant sentiment is even more prevalent in regions, where few migrants reside. V4 countries repeatedly oppose relocation of refugees and encourage closure of the borders. While V4 portrays itself as fighting for the integrity of the Schengen zone, they veto practically all initiatives that seek relocation and solidarity in the EU.  Public attitudes in the region towards migrants are one of the most hostile in whole Europe. |
| **Activities Proposed (500 words)** | 1. Seed funding to the multi-country **Refugee and migration movement-building lab** hosted by the social incubator **Purpose.** The Lab will look into engaging the public already sympathizing with the struggle of refugees and to address the undecided middle populations with the final aims to re-frame the general attitude to a more positive standpoint. To achieve this it will work to:   * Connect organizations already active in the field of migration such as migrant organizations, service provision communities * Improve their capacity in communication and mobilization of local communities through training, workshops, and assistance with communication products. * Engage community organizations and constituencies new to the migration scene  such as business, labor unions, faith groups etc. through targeted media campaigns and online mobilization movement building   The Lab will engage at national level in Germany, UK, France, Poland and Italy with potential engagement in Sweden/Spain/Czech Republic/Greece with prospects of opening to global scale (US and Canada).    2. **Support to** **“The Middle England” project of HOPE not hate**, focusing on community organizing & grassroots actions to build middle ground community resilience against extremism in the UK. Hope not Hate is a well-known research based campaign organization in the UK. They have conducted numerous successful campaigns in the last decade which contributed to the defeat of far right parties in several election campaigns and tackled different forms of xenophobia. Given the recent rise of anti-immigrant feeling towards migrant and refugee groups in the UK (and elsewhere in Europe), HnH has become more and more active on challenging the toxic narratives.    3. **Seed funding to Offene Gesellschaft initiative**, a strategy and campaign platform, promoting open society in Germany through intelligent political campaigning, founded by Harald Welzer, a leading German sociologist and think tanker (Stiftung Futurzwei), Alexander Carius, founder and head of the think tank adelphi, Stefan Wegner, partner and managing director of communications agency Scholz & Friends and Andre Wilkens, former director of the Open Society Institute Brussels, Mercator Centre in Berlin, and former UNHCR Head of Strategic Communications . OS was set up in December 2015 and initiated a series of debates on the future of Germany and Europe, justice, religion, security and, of course, the refugee and migrant inflows into Germany/Europe. The OSF grant will allow to put the Initiative on a more professional footing, and to establish it as an independent campaign platform for an open society.    **4. Unallocated funds:**  Additional funds will be dedicated to emerging initiatives countering toxic narratives. Assessment criteria will include the existence of particular opportunity to induce change. |
| **Summary for Board Reports (100 words)** | Migration in Europe has been an emerging priority for OSIFE with intensification in 2015. However, the vast scale of the European refugee influx was unforeseen at the time the 2016 workplan was first drafted. With the majority of the 2016 OSIFE funds allocated to supporting grass-roots and bottom up organizations working on migrants’ rights, asylum, and border issues, the proposed reserve fund allocation will allow for additional resources to be allocated towards countering xenophobic attitudes in Europe, move parts of the political mainstream towards more pro-refugee positions, and build constituencies around a more progressive approach to migration and asylum. |
| **Collaborating Programs within OSF and essential partners or grantees** | **OSF Programs:** International Migration Initiative (IMI), OSEPI, Governance and Debate unit of OSIFE  **External partners/grantees:** Hope not Hate, Purpose, Offene Gesellschaft |
| **Contributions expected from Collaborating Programs (250 words)** | The work will be lead though active collaboration between major partners and OSF. OSF programs will provide staff time and expertise as follows:   * OSIFE Migration & Inclusion Unit will manage the grants to Purpose and Hope not Hate * Governance and Debate unit of OSIFE will manage the grant to Offene Gesellschaft * IMI/OSEPI will provide relevant expertise as appropriate and upon request * The Communications Office will be consulted on the media outreach work |
| **Statement of who within OSF would guide the work** | OSIFE Migration and Inclusion Unit will coordinate the overall work on anti-migrant narratives. |

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| **Allocator**  *(See list on* [*Reserve Funds KARL*](https://karl.soros.org/communities/reserves/view.html)*)* | Name | Jordi Vaquer | |
| Date Approved | 8 March 2016 | |
| **Allocator Notes / Comments**  *(To be completed by allocator only)* | *(Notes/Comments - Optional field)*  *This is a timely topic and request. It covers at the same time a real need (to address the massive change in public sentiment in Europe around refugees and migrants) and a direct request from George Soros to support specific groups (and not to support other requests) in Britain and Germany. The unallocated part is slightly unorthodox, but it makes sense in a rapidly moving context where OSIFE is receiving proposals every week.* | | |
| *(Criteria checklist)*  Is this an unforeseen opportunity or a genuinely new idea to advance core open society commitments?  Is the need time-sensitive?  Are we proposing to do something that others are not doing?  Is the plan compelling?  Does the planned activity take good advantage of OSF capacity?  Is the team leading the work up to the task? | | |
| **Urgency level for grant approval & payments** | **Not** Rapid Response | | Rapid Response *(See procedure on* [*KARL*](https://karl.soros.org/communities/reserves/files/ii.-policies/rapid-response-as-of-10-november-2014.docx/)*)* |
| **If approved, where to allocate the budget?**  *(If the budget is split between multiple programs, please copy/paste this section as needed.)* | Amount | | $600,000 |
| Category of Work | | FIELD : Fealty to Equity & Social Inclusion |
| Division/Program Code | | OSIFE : MIGRATION : Inclusion in European cities (O241B) |
| Entity *(i.e., FPOS, ZUG)* | | 40% OSIBP 60% ZUG |
| Fund Class *(i.e., Lobbying/Non-Lobbying)* | | 50% Lobbying and 50% Non-Lobbying |
| Geography *(of benefit)* | | 100% Europe |
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