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**NGO Development Small Grants Program
FY 2014**

**The Embassy of the United States of America
Public Affairs Section**

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The Faculty of Law, University of Ljubljana
“Second Contemporary Challenges of International Environmental Law Conference” (\$2,000 USD)

The Faculty of Law of the University of Ljubljana organized the second conference in the series of international interdisciplinary scientific conferences on environmental issues entitled SECOND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES OF INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CONFERENCE on June 5-7, 2014. The aim of the conference was to discuss innovative solutions to environmental challenges and concerns through interdisciplinary debates addressing the broad spectrum of environmental concerns, including not only perspectives of legal scholars and practitioners, but also experts in the field of natural sciences, philosophy, economy, political and social sciences. Eighty one panelists and presenters from all continents, including renowned experts and engaged early stage researchers, presented their views and perceptions on a variety of environmental issues from questions on conceptual development of international environmental law, understanding the right to the environment, intergenerational justice, indigenous peoples, to economic assessments of environmental management. New solutions were offered to the challenges of protection of water, oceans, biodiversity, threatened species and forests, as well as to climate change negotiations and the increasing role of non-state actors in the creation of new mechanisms and practices for environmental management. American professor Elisabeth Burleson addressed the question of decision-making that would address both climate change and the energy needs of the population worldwide. She presented three different approaches to cutting the greenhouse gas emissions, either by adopting a global tax and putting a price on carbon, setting up a worldwide cap and trade system, or adopting effective regulation to cut greenhouse emission.

IZIDA

“From Creative Thinking to Youth Entrepreneurship” (\$5,000 USD)

The overall purpose of the project is to increase youth employability by enabling children – with a specific focus on children from economically disadvantaged families – to develop entrepreneurial skills and consequently gain the possibility of entry in the labor market as entrepreneurs later in their lives. In the first phase of the project, Izida organized and implemented introductory presentations of creative thinking and entrepreneurship and developed the materials necessary for the successful implementation of the workshops. In the second phase of the project, workshops for children who demonstrate interest are implemented. Special attention is given to including socially disadvantaged children. The project will also include a study visit of successful private companies and employers, where children will have the opportunity to meet the entrepreneurs and discuss the topics previously learned at the workshops in a practical manner.



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Slovene Philanthropy

“Giving Back to Society” (\$3,000 USD)

Giving back to the Community – Corporate Volunteering Week is an action implemented by Slovene Philanthropy and the American Chamber of Commerce. It is not just about volunteering among companies and their employees; it strives to have a long-term impact on the companies’ strategies and to spread awareness about the importance of corporate social responsibility for overall development, not just the companies and individuals, but the country’s economy as well. Overall, more than 700 volunteers worked at 49 locations, donating 4,098 hours of work and social responsibility. U.S. Embassy Ljubljana initiated and participated in a “Diplomatic Day of Service” as part of this project.

Basketball Club Tolmin

“Basketball Camp” (\$1,500 USD)

A week-long international Basketball Camp in Tolmin was realized with the help of seven American coaches from the International Sport federation and several domestic experts. It gathered more than 100 participants from 9-17 years old and was an ideal chance for a child to learn about team work, how to overcome difficulties, strengthen solidarity and companionship, reinforce personal responsibility, and above all to play basketball and have some fun!

Local Development Foundation for Pomurje

“NGO Entrepreneur” (\$4,500 USD)

The general objective of this project is to raise the awareness of youth from Pomurje about various employment and entrepreneurship possibilities in a region with high unemployment rate. The core of the project is a professional training for a group of young unemployed persons about the possibilities of the employment within the NGO sector. The result of this project will also be an e-guide for young unemployed persons about the opportunities and needs of the civil society and how to establish and manage and NGO.

Joze Pucnik Institute

“Weekends for Women” (\$5,000 USD)

This project will include five one-day trainings for women who wish to take part in local government but feel that they lack certain skills to be successful. The project will take place in five municipalities in Slovenia. The lectures/public discussions will be held by renowned female politicians – an MP, MEP, a minister, a mayor – who will speak about their experiences and discuss with the participants the most interesting aspects of their political career. The aim is to offer participants first-hand knowledge of the different sides of the decision-making process on various levels. The workshops will be dedicated to skills that are necessary for successful involvement in the local government, such as public speaking, training “on camera,” defending an issue, problem solving, etc.



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United Nations Association Slovenia “Youth Competencies for the Challenges of the Globalized World”

(\$1,500 USD)

As part of this project, two international conferences were organized. The first was a four-day Model United Nations (MUN) Simulation on the topic of energy security in cooperation with the Academic Forum for Foreign Affairs in Graz. During the conference, the main goal was a simulation of the UN organization – students acted as delegates and negotiated on the topic of energy security. The conference was attended by Slovenian and foreign students who improved their knowledge on energy security and energy diplomacy, rhetoric, and negotiation skills. It also transferred good practices among youth organizations. Second, the Summer School on the United Nations was a three-day seminar entitled “Youth Competencies for the Challenges of the Globalized World” took place in August. This seminar strengthened the capacity of youth organizations. During the seminar, the following topics were addressed: stereotypes and intercultural dialogue, intercultural negotiations, and Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 Development Agenda. The seminar also included workshops on the topic of public relations, project development, diplomatic protocol and employment opportunities in the UN (in cooperation with UNIS Vienna). The project gave the participants knowledge and skills for their future work, but it also strengthened the organization’s capacities.

Local Development Center Pivka “Armor of freedom” (\$2,000 USD)

This project aimed to commemorate the U.S.-Slovene military to military relationship that we have enjoyed since the Second World War. The plaque raised is dedicated to American-Slovene cooperation during and after WWII and will further strengthen fruitful cooperation between the countries, between the members of the countries’ armed forces, and the U.S. Embassy Ljubljana and the Pivka Park of Military History. This commemorative plaque is a valuable addition to the exhibition “Armor of Freedom” that highlights the U.S. military cooperation with the former Yugoslavia and its successor states. It preserves the memory of the past, reminds us of the present, and will be a basis for future cooperation.

Legebitra “Human Library” (\$5,000 USD)

The project will, through the introduction of diversity and raising awareness on human rights, encourage the acceptance of diversity and strive to greater social inclusion of more vulnerable social groups in order to achieve greater cohesion of the Slovene multicultural space. The Human Library is a means of promoting respect for human rights and human dignity, and aims to raise awareness of, and enable constructive dialogue about prejudices/stereotypes that frequently lead to discrimination against individuals or groups of people. The Human Library works



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exactly like a normal library – readers come and borrow a ‘book’ for a limited period of time. After reading it they return the book to the library and – if they want – they can borrow another book. There is only one difference: the books in the Human Library are human beings, and the books and readers enter into a personal dialogue. The books in the Human Library are people representing groups frequently confronted with prejudices and stereotypes, and who are often victims of discrimination or social exclusion. The ‘reader’ of the library can be anybody who is ready to talk with his or her own prejudice and stereotype and wants to spend an hour of his time on this experience. In the Human Library, books cannot only speak, but they are able to reply to the readers’ questions, and the books can even ask questions and learn themselves.

Social Academy

“SOS – Remember, Remind Change” (\$5,000 USD)

“SOS – spominjamo, opominjamo, spreminjamo” (SOS – Remember, Remind, Change) is a youth project which aims to contribute to the construction of Slovenian identity of young people (aged 18–29 years) and to appeasement, reflection, understanding, respect, and good relationships in our closer and wider communities. The purpose of the project is to encourage young people to actively engage for better relationships in our local communities and beyond, based on respect for diversity and tolerant dialogue, by making them aware of conflicts and violence in the Slovenian recent history. The (post-) WWII violent events that present grave violations of basic human rights are a very topical and pressing issue in Slovenia. There are various interpretations of these events. Various actors rarely engage in a sincere and open dialogue to seek together objective facts. In such a situation young people are often confused or disinterested, and that is why they find these important topics discouraging. In the formal educational system these issues are not adequately addressed. On the other hand, we see an opportunity for young people to contribute to greater tolerance and improvement of a democratic dialogue and co-existence of people with different beliefs by providing appropriate support to their initiatives and creativity.

SENT

“Fifth Days of Social Economy in Light of the U.S. Experience”

(\$4,000 USD)

The focus of this year’s conference was on employment in the social economy, crowd funding, and creating connections between good practices from the United States, EU, and Slovenia and how to establish a good support environment. More than 70 people gathered at the three-day event organized by Sent, SKUP, and ENSIE. This grant enabled two American representatives to talk about inclusion and employment of people with disabilities in the United States.



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Studio 12

“DERIVATIVE” (\$5,000 USD)

The “Derivative” or “Izpeljanka” project consists of producing a 30-45 minute documentary about the influence of American culture on Slovenia and its practices. It will feature young Slovenian people employing American inventions and ideas - Apple podcasts, mobile applications, internet series, stand-up comedy, and conferences like TED. The film will show how Slovenians have taken the aforementioned ideas and transformed them into something new that subsequently had a great influence on their own cultural heritage. The project will bring together independent media professionals and young volunteers who, at the time of high unemployment, need work experience in order to get ahead. The globalization process is an omnipresent reality. For most Slovenians, the word globalization has a negative connotation. Slovenian citizens see globalization as a process in which their culture will gradually regress and their national awareness will be threatened. The documentary aims to adopt an objective perspective on the situation. A lot of activities in Slovenia have been inspired by American ideas or culture in one way or another, and culturally adapted in a number of different ways. The documentary will show how Slovenian people took some of those ideas and turned them into something new. The documentary focuses on some American concepts and items that are fairly recent in Slovenia.

Institute for African Studies

“Fighting Racism - Knowledge Sharing from the USA” (\$3,000 USD)

This project aims at raising awareness of the African Diaspora and the ongoing problem of racism and discrimination. In order to tackle these issues and to present new perspectives and innovative approaches and analysis, three round-tables in three different cities in Slovenia (Koper, Maribor, and Ljubljana) will be organized. They will invite two well-known African-American experts, one from civil society and one from academia (Howard University) to discuss racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance and to address the historical and continuing violation of rights of people from African descent. Those two key experts will add an undeniable asset to the round-tables by sharing the experiences of the Civil Rights Movement. In addition, they choose to select a well-known scholar from Howard University, because of the role of this university in American history in general and more specifically in the Civil Rights Movement. A third panelist will come from Hungary, Michael Simmons, American Human Rights Advocacy and Community Organizing Consultant and one of the founders of the “Raday Salon” in Budapest, which is an independent Human Rights oriented program.

Sezam

“War and Peace” (\$5,000 USD)



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This project will be done in cooperation with the Museum of Contemporary History and the Faculty of Arts and will include lectures and workshops for primary and secondary school children about WWI: a presentation of various army uniforms and equipment, the development of industry and its impact on the development of arms and military doctrines, the peace doctrine by Woodrow Wilson, the development of the international peace organizations and the presentation of the U.S. role in it. The project will also include site visits to Bovec and Kobarid and the Posocje area.

YES, Young Executive Society

“YES Bridge” (\$3,000 USD)

Universities produce a lot of innovative solutions that don't find their way to the market. In Slovenia especially, universities face difficulties when selling their solutions to Slovenian companies and are much more successful in sales abroad. The basic problem is miscommunication and a gap between domestic research facilities and industry, which have troubles finding the common language for cooperation and collaboration. The main goal of the project is to establish at least 10 spin-offs annually.

INFOGOBBLERS

“WWI Researchers” (\$2,300 USD)

This project was intended for children and youth on the topic of WWI. Five day workshops consisted from the following topics: a historical overview, life of the civil population, art and propaganda, and film and technology and literature. Two groups consisting of 30 children prepared the final exhibition to showcase new knowledge and information gained.

Intellectual Property institute

“Intellectual Property For Young Entrepreneurs and Start-Ups” (\$5,000 USD)

The purpose of the project is to introduce entrepreneurs to the basics of intellectual property and related issues and equip them with knowledge that will enable them to avoid intellectual property infringement and to effectively solve problems that intellectual property infringement may cause. The project consists of three workshops, group consultations, and on-line publications.

POLIGON, Creative Center

“Further Development of Crowdfunding Lab @ Poligon Creative Center”

(\$3,500 USD)

The main purpose of the activities proposed is to share experience in know how gained by Crowdfunding LAB experts and the Slovenian crowdfunding community. The activities within this project will include the following events:
(1) “Sit Down, You Got an A”: presentations of successful crowdfunding campaigns in order to give valuable feedback for improvements of the crowdfunding campaign and to establish potential collaborations with participants



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(4 events) and (2) “How We Did It”: to share know-how of successful crowdfunding campaigns, and presentations from U.S. speakers are included with the interactive discussion with participants (4 events). A strong component of this project is also dissemination of the information and exchange of knowledge and experience and research work as well.

ANGLUNIFE

“Memories From Underneath the Ashes” (\$5,000 USD)

The objective of the project is to educate young Roma people and the majority population on the importance of the respect of human rights. “Memories from underneath the ashes” will enable a wide group of young Roma and Sinti community members from Slovenia to visit three World War II concentration camps in Slovenia (Begunje), Croatia (Jasenovac) and Germany (Dachau). Besides these one-day study visits, they will also attend the mass commemorative march in Ljubljana, “The Path along the Wire,” taking place every year at the begging of May. They will record all project activities by photographing them and at the end of the project they will present them in exhibitions in Ljubljana and two other places in Slovenia. The aim of the project is to raise awareness among Roma people and the majority population about the destiny of Roma people in the times of the Holocaust. By enabling young Roma people to visit these commemoration places and witness the history of their predecessors, Anglunife will help to preserve this historic memory.

Salamander Baseball & Softball Club

“Sports Connects - Softball For All” (\$4,700 USD)

The Salamander Club will organize an international indoor softball tournament. There will be four tournaments. Slovenian teams and teams from other countries (Austria, Italy, and Germany and U.S. military teams from Germany, Croatia, Serbia, and the Czech Republic) will participate. They expect 8 - 10 teams for each tournament. Between 100-150 players are expected each time. This tournament will bring together different generations, different cultures, and will include boys and girls.

Youth Culture Incubator Attic – Mansarda Lendava

“Let's Cross Borders - Unite the World” (\$6,000 USD)

The program contains various inter-active activities: lectures and discussions, workshops, excursions, celebrations of particular international days, photography exhibitions, selfies, documentary movies, and a brochure on the following topics: the Hungarian minority, Roma people and women with an emphasis on gender equality. The vision of the project is to provide an open space where the youth from Lendava and its surroundings can cross as many as possible borders regarding vulnerable groups, especially the Hungarian minority, Roma people, and women, emphasizing gender equality and respect of human rights and democracy.



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Euro Atlantic Council Slovenia

“Balkan SAYS” (\$5,000 USD)

This was a three-day youth oriented, security seminar, with the goal of connecting youth from the region and abroad to discuss relevant security related topics and to search for fresh views and solutions to the most pressing regional issues from the youth perspective. The Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia and its Youth Section contributed to security, stability and cooperation in the region of Western Balkans through lectures, workshops, networking, and debate among young professionals and experts in the field of international security for over 40 participants.

Free Legal Aid Clinic

“Justice 4 U” (\$6,000 USD)

This project aims to connect young law students or graduates with their clients. Students will have the opportunity to see real life cases and obtain much needed legal practice. The second stage of the project aims to start an interactive free legal advice web page that will enable broad access to all people that seek free legal advice.

AFRONT

“Ignorance = Darkness = Obstacle” (\$5,000 USD)

Is public space accessible to all people?

Are we equal in the space?

Is quality inclusive architecture really a luxury?

All public architecture should be well designed for all people!

The main event was an exhibition at Kresija Gallery in Ljubljana, called **IGNORANCE = DARKNESS = OBSTACLE**, which drew attention to the fact that a well-designed and accessible space is a fundamental right of all people and should be accessible also to all people with any kind of disabilities. The exhibition was also part of 50th anniversary of Biennial of Design and side program included school visits and workshops with youth.

Slovenian Association of Journalists

“Naprej/Forward Media Festival” (\$2,500 USD)

The Naprej/Forward festival is the first festival of media culture and trends in Slovenia and in the broader former Yugoslav region. It is organized by the Slovene Association of Journalists. The aim of the festival is to raise professional standards and quality of reporting in Slovenia, as it has seen a notable decrease over the last few years. Through lectures, workshops, and debates, they also aim to educate their members, especially young professionals as they are entering a very insecure media market, which has, mainly due to poor strategic ownership, failed to react and adapt to both technological and other changes in global



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media. The event will also feature U.S. speaker Graham Roberts, Senior Editor in Graphics at the New York Times.

SKL – Slovenian Basketball League

“The Introduction of Tee Ball in Slovenian Primary Schools” (\$10,000 USD)

The main purpose of this project is to have Tee-Ball included in the sports curriculum in Slovenian primary schools. This project will be implemented in three phases: (1) Preparation of a handbook and training materials for teachers, implementation of presentation workshops in schools, (2) Demonstrations to pupils in schools, and (3) Competitions across the country. This project will include the involvement of at least 4,000 children between 6 to 12 years of age. The project will include an American coach, who will travel around Slovenia to promote the game in the schools.

Center for the Legal Protection of Human Rights

“Open Your Eyes - Pupils against Human Trafficking” (\$6,000 USD)

This project is entirely devoted to the fight against human trafficking in a precautionary manner. Recognition of the problem is the key to its prevention; therefore our project focuses on raising awareness on the issue among the public and especially children and youth. By performing lectures in primary schools, they will present the issue of human trafficking in all its forms to the most vulnerable groups of people, the youth and children, and inform them about the ways of recruitment and trafficking of children and youth, safety measures, and forms of self-protection. The project will directly involve about 2,000 children in grades 7 -9 in primary school in Slovenia. The project performers will implement over 60 workshops.

Eduardo Mendieta and Institute for Philosophical Studies, University of Primorska

“The Poesis of Peace” (\$2,000 USD)

Throughout history, sages, philosophers and theologians have searched for the proper measure to secure what in a most intimate sense could be described as “peace.” In search of this measure, and for a proper self-affection which could enable and host its enigmatic revelation, sometimes they were close to silence and wonder(s) of its ecstasy, sometimes they were relentlessly in search for the foundation – as formulated in the languages or discourses of being, different hierarchies, or varied (but essentially identical) gods. Theologians and philosophers too often regressed into dissent, conflict, even war. With this conference, the organizers would like to enliven different languages and measures, as present in philosophies of the ancient world, as well as in modern thinking and the poetry of peace. Professor Mendieta, who has edited over one dozen books dealing with the Frankfurt School, contemporary Latin American philosophy, and issues relating to religion, globalization, and global justice, was a key note speaker.



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Catherine Kling and the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana
“14th Congress of European Association of Agricultural Economists: Agri-Food and Rural Innovations for Healthier Societies” (\$2,000 USD)

Agricultural and food policies have returned to the center of societal discussions in Europe. Rising food prices and greater volatility of farm incomes, growing unemployment resulting from Europe’s economic crisis, public uncertainty about the benefits and risks of new technologies, the heavy weight of diet-related diseases and growing concern about the resilience of Europe’s food system in the face of threats from climate change and resource scarcities all contribute to this discussion. For the EAAE as a scientific society it is crucial to address these challenges and to offer insights into opportunities for reversing or mitigating some of the growing imbalances – macroeconomic, planetary boundaries, diet, global disparities and the uneven distribution of economic activity across territorial space – which undermine the health and sustainability of our societies. At the same time, agriculture, food, and the wider bio-economy have great potential to contribute to sustainable solutions and green growth. Some policy seeks to encourage innovation and greater competitiveness across the bio-economy in order to realize this potential. This congress intends to take stock of the insights of scholars into these issues in all areas of agricultural, food and rural economics. The concept of healthier societies underlines the role of actors and networks and the need for innovations and solutions which are balanced, sustainable and inclusive. The event featured Catherine Kling is Charles F. Curtiss Distinguished Professor of Economics and Director of the Center for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) at Iowa State University. She is a Fellow of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association and past president of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists.



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