

## Inroads Partnership Fund: Supporting Members to Understand and Reduce Abortion Stigma Request for Proposals (RFP)

Proposals due September 8, 2016

[Inroads](#) (the International Network for the Reduction of Abortion Discrimination and Stigma) was founded in 2013 with the goal of **building a world free of abortion stigma**. In order to fully understand and address abortion stigma, inroads hosts a grant-making and capacity-strengthening fund to support organizations around the world to understand, mitigate and challenge abortion stigma.

This grants and capacity-strengthening fund is grounded in the understanding that transformative change results from collective work and that the most appropriate solutions for each community reside within that community. We will tackle the issue of abortion stigma – which contributes to the social, medical, and legal marginalization of abortion worldwide – in countries and communities across the globe. We seek to **understand and end abortion stigma so that we can all start to reimagine and value abortion worldwide**.

### **Purpose**

The inroads Partnership Fund (iPF) is designed to further **collective learning and action to understand and reduce abortion stigma** by funding and supporting local organizations in the design, implementation, and evaluation of strategies to understand and shift how abortion stigma affects people socially, physically, and emotionally. In addition to advancing further the understanding of the questions laid out in the learning agenda for abortion stigma (Fig 1), inroads supports customized capacity strengthening of grantees and aims to contribute to the development of a global movement around abortion stigma through the iPF.

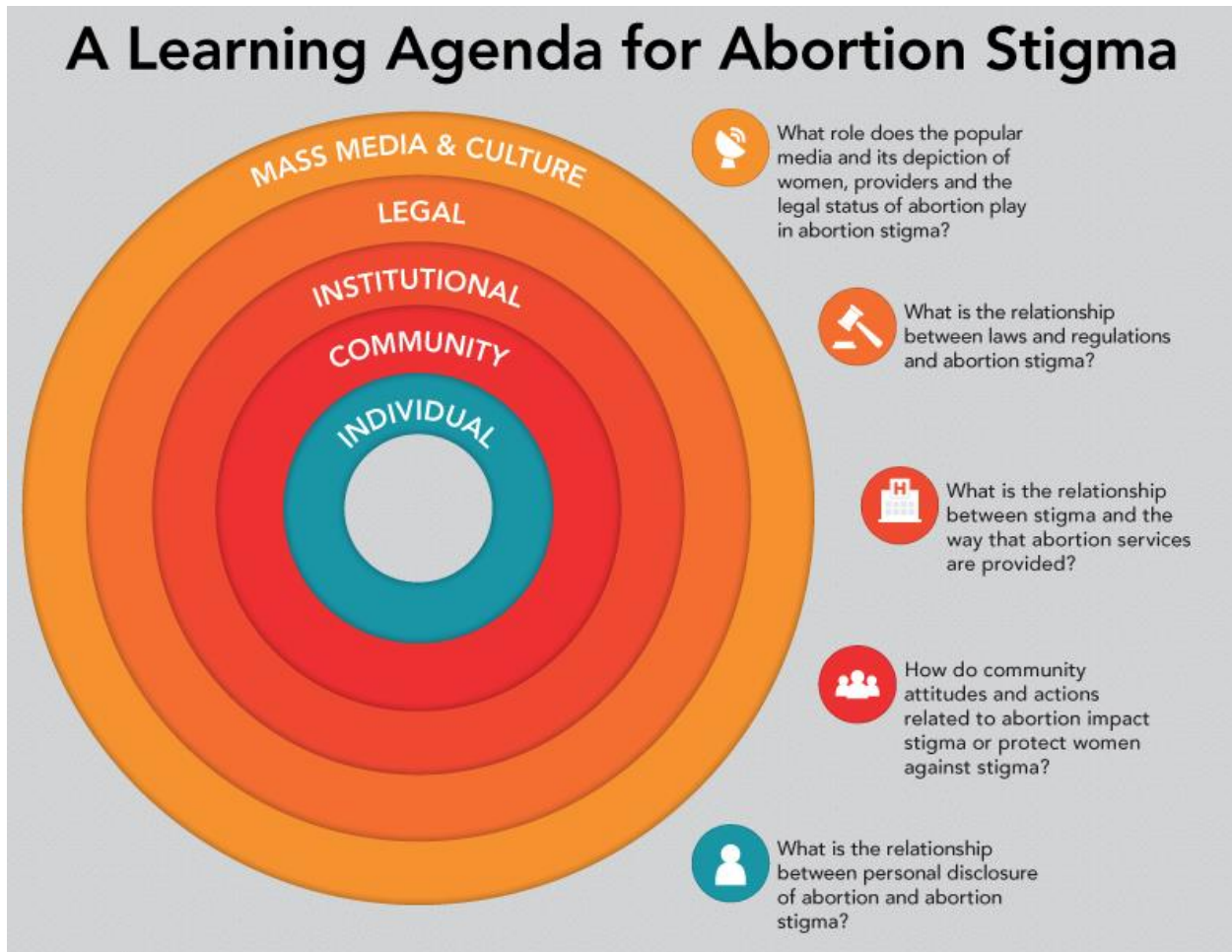
Successful grant applicants will seek to further understand or reduce abortion-related stigma and discrimination. Applicants may choose to:

- **Generate evidence** about the various causes, consequences, and manifestations of abortion stigma across one or more of the levels of abortion stigma illustrated in the learning agenda (Fig 1). Evidence can include qualitative and quantitative data, testimonies, and community narratives.
- **Pilot innovative strategies** for defining, reducing, and mitigating stigma that operates in one or more of the levels of abortion stigma (illustrated in Figure 1).

In order to foster global dialogue and partnerships across organizations working on stigma, the Partnership Fund provides a select number of community-based organizations or collaborations with comprehensive start-up support for strategies to further collective learning to reduce abortion stigma. This includes:

- 16 month grants that range in size from \$10,000 to \$25,000 (November 2016 – March 2018)
- Tailored technical and strategic support (content input, documentation, monitoring and evaluation support, ability to share strategies with inroads experts and through inroads fora, etc.)
- Capacity-strengthening and skills-building through regional and/or south-south networking and global information exchange

Figure 1



## Project period

Maximum duration of 16 months. Earliest start date is November 15, 2016, and the latest conclusion date is March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

## Funds available

The inroads Partnership Fund Grants can fund work up to a maximum of USD **\$25,000**. There is a total pool of \$150,000 available to measure stigma or develop stigma measurement and innovations in 2016. We expect to fund 6-10 projects, ranging in budget from USD \$10,000 to \$25,000 for up to 16 months.

## Eligibility

The iPF will support ideas and projects that are **innovative** and **bold** approaches to **challenging stigma** and are **aligned** with one or more of the questions in the learning agenda for abortion (Table 1).

Inroads member organizations and collaborations are eligible to apply for inroads Partnership funds. The lead applicant must be locally registered and have a bank account or fiscal sponsor who is authorized to receive wire transfers. The review committee will prioritize applicants who do not already have sustained funding to support stigma reduction efforts. Applicants who already have funding to support stigma efforts must demonstrate how the innovative strategies they propose will allow them to build on existing activities and/or to try new modalities or methods. While written materials must be submitted in English, the review committee will prioritize the relevance and feasibility of the approach being proposed over the writing quality.

Inroads is also committed to encouraging and supporting collaborations among members. We encourage members to consider partnering with one another for this effort. If you'd like to know who other members are, simply log into the [inroads Collaboration Workspace](#), and click on "Members."

**Eligibility criteria at a glance.** Applications will be reviewed for eligibility by inroads staff. Eligible applications will be reviewed by a review panel comprised of other inroads members.

- Applicant must be a current member of inroads, or have other individuals at the same organization who are members of inroads. Individuals and organizations who join after July 18, 2016 are not eligible for this opportunity.
- Lead applicant must be a locally registered community-based organization (CBO), non-governmental organization (NGO), coalition or network.
- Applicants must have a bank account that can receive wire transfers, or must have a fiscal sponsor authorized to receive wire transfers.
- Application must propose an approach to *\*measure\** or *\*reduce\** abortion stigma.
- If applicant has received other funding to support efforts to measure or reduce abortion stigma, application clearly demonstrates how this project would build on, innovate, or improve efforts already supported.

- ❑ Application form submitted with completed proposal uploaded by **September 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm** US Eastern Standard Time.

We are currently only able to accept applications submitted in English. We do not yet have the systems in place to consistently and fairly review Spanish or French applications or to provide project support. We are in the process of increasing those resources and staffing in a way that will allow us to consider Spanish and French applications in future rounds of grants. Stay tuned for our pilot of the new processes with our upcoming Seed Grants.

### Review Criteria

The inroads Partnership Fund will support ideas and projects that are bold and inspiring approaches to **understanding or challenging stigma**. We encourage applicants to align their proposed approaches with one or more of the questions in the **learning agenda for abortion stigma (Table 1)**, or with another theory of change.

We also encourage inroads members to **partner and collaborate** on an application. Applicants who already have funding to support stigma efforts must demonstrate how the innovative strategies **build on, innovate, or improve** existing activities. While written materials must be submitted in English, the review committee will prioritize the relevance and feasibility of the approach being proposed over the writing quality.

**Review criteria at a glance.** Eligible applicants will be scored by a review panel consisting of inroads staff, a volunteer panel of inroads members, and inroads Steering Committee members. At least three reviewers will assess how well the applications meet the following criteria on a 5 point scale (Very strong/positive - Very weak/negative).

Prior Achievements & Current Work	<i>How closely do the prior achievements and current work cited relate to this proposal? Has the applicant been an active member of inroads (participated in the inroads Collaboration Workspace, attended any inroads functions or events)? (Assessed by inroads staff)</i>
Consistent with RFP	<i>How consistent is the proposed approach with the descriptions and theory shared in the Request for Proposal?</i>
Technical expertise	<i>How strongly does the applicant demonstrate the technical expertise needed to do abortion stigma work? Do they have a plan for collaboration to offset any gaps or weaknesses?</i>
Resources	<i>How sufficient are the proposed resources (financial and human) to carry out the project?</i>
Context	<i>Does the applicant describe how the project will address stigma specific to the country/local context?</i>

Purpose	<i>Does the applicant provide goals and specific objectives, including who will benefit from this work?</i>
Approach	<i>Do the proposed activities move forward the key questions that need to be addressed to mitigate abortion stigma? (Consider the proposed Learning Agenda to Address Abortion Stigma). If the applicant has past or current funding, does the approach clearly demonstrate how this support would build on, innovate or improve current activities?</i>
Stigma measurement (if applicable)	<i>Is the proposed approach appropriate for measuring stigma at the level that the project aims? If the applicant plans to collect data from people, is there a plan for ethical review?</i>
Feasibility	<i>How feasible is the approach, given the time frame/budget?</i>
Monitoring & Evaluation	<i>Does the applicant have a plan for monitoring and evaluation? Does the applicant explain how to determine if the project was successful?</i>
Sharing with inroads members	<i>Does the application include a plan for sharing progress and findings with inroads members?</i>
Additional considerations	<i>Does the application reflect collaboration among inroads members? Does the application engage with intersecting stigmas, or with principles of reproductive justice? Inroads staff and Steering Committee will also consider geographic and organizational diversity across applications, as well as diversity of approaches.</i>

Based on those rankings, reviewers will assign an overall recommendation of *Strongly recommend for funding, Recommend for funding, Would not recommend for funding, or Don't know*. Based on review panel scores, the 10-12 most promising applicants will be elevated to the inroads Staff and Steering Committee for due diligence and final award selection.

### **Application Process**

On July 26, inroads will host a [webinar](#) to provide potential applicants with background information about the application and review process. Interested members may apply for this opportunity on the inroads website. Applicants may complete a brief application form and upload a proposal and relevant documents on this page: [www.endabortionstigma.org/get-involved/apply](http://www.endabortionstigma.org/get-involved/apply).

<b>Timeline</b>	
Request for proposals initiated by email and distribution list.	<b>July 19, 2016</b>
Webinar for inroads members and potential applicants	<b>July 26, 2016</b>
Applications due at <a href="http://www.endabortionstigma.org/get-involved/apply">www.endabortionstigma.org/get-involved/apply</a>	<b>September 8, 2016</b>
Application review process	<b>September 9 – October 25, 2016</b>
Award notifications	<b>October 25, 2016</b>

Grant agreement negotiations	<b>October 25 – November 4, 2016</b>
Financial disbursements	<b>November 7 – 11, 2016</b>
Earliest project start-up date	<b>November 15, 2016</b>
Inroads staff and grantees work together to develop TA plan and final work plans	<b>November 15 – December 15, 2016</b>
Approximate mid-grant report submission deadline	<b>June 30, 2017</b>
Inroads Partnership Fund grantee in-person meeting	<b>May – June, 2017</b>
Latest project conclusion date	<b>March 30, 2018</b>
Draft final report submission deadline	<b>April 15, 2018</b>
Q&A exchange and submission of final report	<b>April 30, 2018</b>

### Reporting and Sharing Progress and Results

- For funded proposals, additional financial documents may be requested before funds are disbursed. These may include a certificate of registration, audited financial statement, organizational accountability structure, etc. which will be determined during the grant negotiation period. Grant awards may only be transferred to a bank account held by an applicant or sponsor organization. Wire transfers will be made by Ipas, the host organization for inroads.
- During the first month of the project, grantees will work with inroads staff to develop a technical assistance approach and finalize work plans. Grantees will also be encouraged to share lessons learned and successes with other inroads members via the inroads Collaboration Workspace listserv, social media outlets, or the *Making inroads* blog.
- A draft narrative report and a financial report will be due to inroads two weeks after the conclusion of the project following by a two week period of clarifications and revisions to the finalize the report.
- Inroads will support grantees in exploring opportunities to share project results in order to foster exchange of knowledge, approaches, and tools furthering the collective learning to understand and reduce abortion stigma. This could include presenting findings at an inroads member meeting, assistance with peer-reviewed journal article development and submission, identification of and support to attend other conferences for presentations, or setting up webinars for virtual learning and exchange. Grantees are required to take part in one or more of these sharing opportunities.

**To apply, download a proposal template [here](#) and then submit your completed proposal with [your application form](#). We look forward to making inroads on abortion stigma with you!**

## Table one: A Learning and Action Agenda for Abortion Stigma

### *Mass Media and Culture*

- a. What is the role of language in creating and perpetuating stigma? What language is more or less stigmatizing? Does developing alternative language and vocabulary reduce stigma?
- b. What role does the popular media and its depiction of women, providers, and the legal status of abortion play in abortion stigma?
- c. How does news coverage of abortion influence stigma?

### *Legal*

- a. What is the relationship between laws and regulations and abortion stigma? What role does criminal law play in stigmatizing abortion seekers and providers? How can law be used as a tool to counteract stigma?
- b. What is the relationship among legal and ethical guidelines, professional medical codes, and abortion stigma?
- c. How do healthcare providers and organizations interpret abortion laws in ways that stigmatize women and/or providers and deny or restrict services?

### *Institutional*

- a. What is the relationship between stigma and the way that abortion services are provided?
- b. What is the relationship between abortion stigma and quality of care? While abortion providers are themselves stigmatized, how do they in turn stigmatize the women they serve? In particular, does improving quality of care decrease stigma and does reducing stigma improve quality of care?
- c. How do different service delivery models, such as the use of medication abortion, impact abortion stigma?

### *Community*

- a. How do community members, including men, experience abortion stigma and how do their experiences differ from and interact with the experiences of women?
- b. How do community attitudes and actions related to abortion impact stigma or protect women against stigma?
- c. Which cultures and which elements within them accept abortion without stigmatizing? How can those elements be strengthened and what can we learn from them that could be transferred to other cultures?

### *Individual*

- a. How does abortion stigma affect women socially, physically, and emotionally?
- b. What individual attributes, types of social support, and skills enable women or providers to resist stigma?
- c. What is the relationship between personal disclosure of abortion and abortion stigma?

*Hessini, L. (2014). [A learning agenda for abortion stigma](#): recommendations from the Bellagio Expert Group Meeting. *Women & Health, 54*(617-621).*