



## PEACE DIRECT – SEARCHING FOR PEACE DIRECT USA FOUNDING TEAM

### *In a nutshell*

Peace Direct (described as ‘Kiva for peace’ – [www.peacedirect.org](http://www.peacedirect.org)) is a young UK based not for profit, looking for a group of passionate and experienced US citizens to form our founding Board in the US.

### *About Peace Direct*

Think of a conflict – it doesn’t matter where – there will always be local people building peace. Sudanese in Sudan, Colombians in Colombia, Sri Lankans in Sri Lanka... They understand the conflict, they have the moral authority, stemming from the sacrifices they have made, to persuade people to change. And they have the greatest long term interest in peace.

Peace Direct finds and funds these civil society organisations to pursue their own strategies, not ours, and promotes their work through the media and directly to people in power. Our long term goal is a world where their work is viewed as central to all efforts to resolve conflict, and where the public’s view of conflict is shaped by their views as well as those of outside commentators. We are aiming to build a new kind of peace organisation that offers the public a direct connection with positive actions for peace.

Peace Direct is a lean organisation, reflecting the culture of the organisations we fund. We have attracted substantial pro bono support, in web design and hosting, branding and graphic design, translation and interpretation, legal and trademarking services, and marketing support.

### *Achievements to date*

After a period of gestation, Peace Direct gained charitable status in 2004. Since then we have:

- Won Best New Charity award in 2005
- Funded work in 12 conflict areas, including Iraq and Afghanistan, and the UK. We currently fund large programmes in DRC, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka and the UK, and smaller projects in Colombia, Nepal, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Somalia.
- Recruited an individual supporter base, currently around 1500 people, who provide over 80% of our core funding requirements
- Secured coverage for local peacebuilding on BBC current affairs programmes in the UK and worldwide, and YouTube
- Built a web database, Insight on Conflict, which hosts information on local peacebuilding initiatives, currently covering 11 conflict areas
- Initiated a series, Insight on Peacebuilding, on how international organisations can form partnerships with the kind of local organisations shown on Insight on Conflict
- Secured funding from two large US foundations, Fetzer and Humanity United
- Grown our revenues to a forecast turnover this year of around \$1.5m, including a major grant from the UK government.

### *Our long term goal as an international organisation*

Peace Direct’s long term aspiration is to be, for the peace and conflict sector, the equivalent of Amnesty or Oxfam – a major not for profit that can educate the public in the positive opportunities to deal with conflict. We want to connect with people outside the UK who can help us realise this vision. Already about 20% of our web traffic comes from the US.

We envisage Peace Direct in ten years time as a close knit network of peer operations in different countries, each contributing insights and ways of working from their own environment, with a co-ordination office managing relationships with the projects we fund. We aim to use technology to the full to create something that feels like a single organism,



while embracing separate legal status entities in each country. Each country operation would be licensed to use the Peace Direct name and branding, with an agreement setting out shared values and ways of working.

We are starting discussions in September with a group of Germans who want to create Peace Direct in Germany, and the time seems right to start the same process in the US. We plan to apply for expansion funding from the Skoll Foundation, and possibly others, in order to be able to make a contribution to the costs of the German and US start ups, with the expectation that within 3 years they will be covering their own costs and contributing to central costs.

Peace Direct will evolve in line with the vision of all those who contribute to it. At the moment, we envisage roles as follows:

**Coordination office (initially UK based)**

- Identify new overseas projects for funding
- Manage relationships with overseas projects including all reporting to donors
- Manage Insight on Conflict
- Ensure constant effective communication across Peace Direct offices
- Oversee governance and global branding and web presence

**Country offices (eg UK, US, Germany)**

- Fundraise from all in-country sources, particularly the public, but including foundations, government and companies
- Promote overseas projects through the media
- Raise the profile and highlight the importance of local peacebuilding with government and others
- Awareness raising about conflict resolution in support of Peace Direct goals – this could include running a local conflict resolution project, similar to the UK's Truce 2020

**Key tasks for the US Founding Team**

We are seeking a group of individuals with appropriate experience and enthusiasm to:

- Register Peace Direct as a 501(c)3 and form/recruit the founding Board of Trustees
- Formulate a high level strategy on how the US operation can contribute to Peace Direct's overall goals
- Develop and implement a short term operational plan including an analysis of the environment, strategy for public fundraising and the development of links with the media and policy makers
- Recruit a Director/CEO

Within the group there need to be people with strong entrepreneurial instincts, with start-up experience, at least one person able to oversee finance, people with experience of public fundraising and also people with a good understanding of conflict resolution, ideally based on first hand experience in conflict areas. Getting Peace Direct USA airborne will require concentrated effort over several years – but will be hugely rewarding as well.

**Next steps**

**If you might be able to help us, please email [Carolyn@peacedirect.org](mailto:Carolyn@peacedirect.org) with a few lines about yourself and what you would hope to contribute. There will be a conference call on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> or Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September for an initial discussion. Or please feel free to call me on the number below beforehand. Looking forward to hearing from you!**

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