

Network Against Islamophobia

The Network Against Islamophobia (NAI), a project of [Jewish Voice for Peace](#), was created to serve as a resource to, and work with, JVP chapters and other groups interested in organizing against Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism and to be a partner to the broader, Muslim-led movement against Islamophobia.

We created these materials – a two session curriculum and resources; a series of modules; and a facilitator guide – so we can be effective, accountable partners in this work.

Many thanks to Nina Mehta and Krysta Williams from the Participatory Action Research Center (PARCEO) for reviewing and contributing so meaningfully to the curriculum and for co-creating the facilitator guide.

Organizing Against Islamophobia and Racism: Coalition Building

PURPOSE OF MODULE:

Many JVP chapters and other groups are thinking about ways to challenge Islamophobia, both within Jewish communities and in partnership with other groups, particularly with Muslim groups and others directly targeted by Islamophobia. This module is designed for groups working in partnership, or wanting to work within coalitions, with Muslim partners and other groups challenging Islamophobia. Jewish organizations, JVP chapters, college campus groups, and other organizing groups can also plan and initiate actions on their own within their communities and in solidarity with other groups (see NAI Planning an Action Module). This module, however, is especially helpful for planning multi-faith actions and organizing processes and for considering questions, thoughts, challenges and possibilities for working in coalitions. We suggest using this module after the Intro module. Other tips for use can be found in the Facilitator Guide.

GOALS:

- TO BE THOUGHTFUL AND PRINCIPLED IN OUR ORGANIZING
- TO WORK WITHIN OUR COMMUNITIES AND ALSO TOGETHER WITH GROUPS FROM WITHIN MUSLIM COMMUNITIES AS WELL AS OTHERS WORKING TO CHALLENGE ISLAMOPHOBIA AND ANTI-ARAB RACISM
- TO BE PART OF THE BROADER MOVEMENT FOR JUSTICE AND AGAINST ALL FORMS OF INJUSTICE AND SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION

MATERIALS:

- [NAI website](#)
- [Chanukah Actions 5776](#)
- Handout #15: Organizing Against Islamophobia (take home)
- Handout #16: Commitments to Challenge Islamophobia and Racism
- Handout #17: NAI Poster Canvassing Tool-Kit (also [online](#))
- Handout #18: What Does Solidarity Look Like? Questions & Lessons in Organizing against Islamophobia (take home)
- Post-it notes

I. Coalition Building: Possibilities and Challenges (15 minutes)

FACILITATOR:

Offer overview of this session, agenda, rationale and use for this module. Post Guiding Questions on separate pieces of paper/poster board around room. Read them out loud. Pass out post-it notes to each person. Participants write their responses to questions on separate post-it notes and then post them in the assigned space for each question. As people are posting, invite participants to walk around and read responses. Guide the discussion and invite people to share more about what they wrote or what stood out to them.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- How do you think about and determine when to create your own programs, and when to work in coalition with other groups?
- What are your questions and/or challenges for doing this work together with other communities, particularly as part of a broader Muslim-led movement?

Additional reflection and discussion questions for now or after session:

- What are examples of ways to challenge Islamophobia that you are familiar with?
- What work are you already a part of that addresses Islamophobia? Whom have you done this work with?

- What are the different ways you identify yourself and how are your identities reflected in your thoughts and work to challenge Islamophobia?
- How do your identities impact the roles or positions you hold in the groups you work with? Does this change in different groups or group formations?
- What are some of the things you consider as a partner when joining a coalition led by Muslim groups and/or other groups directly targeted by Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism?
- How can we think about being proactive (and with whom)?

II. Working Together: Coalitions against Islamophobia (35 minutes)

FACILITATOR:

Pass out Handout #15: Organizing Against Islamophobia; share concrete examples of organizing and work that has been done: Chanukah signs/action; examples from members. Some of these are JVP-led actions. In this module we can consider these examples, but more specifically we focus on actions that are organized and developed within coalitions. (5 minutes)

In small groups, participants share examples of work they have done or hope to do and discuss the following questions, taking notes to report back to the larger group. Also, facilitators make clear that, given the limited time, this section on coalition-based organizing is just a beginning, and follow-up discussions can focus more in-depth on how to further and concretely develop this work. (20 minutes)

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- What are our goals and challenges for working with other groups to challenge Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism?
- How do we honor and build upon our multiple experiences, histories, and locations as we engage in our work?

Additional reflection and discussion questions for now or after training:

- What are some of the guiding principles you think are important to keep in mind when working in coalition with Muslim and other anti-Islamophobia groups?
- Prepare a list of groups you already work with or would like to work with (in the Muslim community and more broadly) around Islamophobia.
- What relationships do you already have/would like to have?
- What would be your explicit goals for building stronger relationships with Muslim communities and with other groups and communities working to challenge Islamophobia?

- What are some of the issues you might work on locally that would relate to and build from the connections and intersections in this work among different communities?
- What concrete next steps can we take to begin or strengthen this work?

Each group takes 3 minutes to share highlights from discussion, including concrete next steps. (10 minutes)

Facilitator writes concrete next steps on chart paper/board.

III. Closing (10 minutes)

FACILITATOR:

Refer back to chart paper with next action steps, ask how individuals and groups will take next steps. Add these next steps and connect ideas that are written on chart paper list. Further guide discussion on questions, concerns, and additional thoughts about how to engage with Islamophobia in coalition with Muslim communities and more broadly.

Pass out additional resources (Handout #18: What Does Solidarity Look Like? Questions & Lessons in Organizing against Islamophobia). Encourage participants to read handout and explore other resources from NAI on their own, including Handout #19: Post-Workshop Readings and Videos on Islamophobia in the United States and Handout #20: Some of Many Groups to Work with and Support in Muslim and Other Impacted Communities. Encourage participants to take special note of video in Handout #19 of Kalia Abiade, leader and activist in the Muslim community (5 min). Encourage participants to continue to think about the reflection and discussion questions from the session.

Thank everyone for participating.