

Invitation to join Betty Tsakarestou as a SUSI Alumna team partner for Alumni TIES Global: Small Grant Application

Dear Professor Ankuran Dutta,

It is my great pleasure and honor to invite you to join me as a team partner to submit a proposal for Alumni TIES Global: Small Grant Application- **Deadline November 23, 2020.**

About the Small Grant Application

Small grants will be awarded a **maximum amount of \$10,000 USD**

This opportunity is offered through my participation in [Alumni Thematic International Exchange Seminar \(Alumni TIES\)](#) program that focused on “**Shaping the Global Narrative on Media Literacy**,” with 55 participants from 39 different countries across six world regions, that due to pandemic, swiftly transitioned from an in-person in Washington DC to a virtual meeting between October 5–9, 2020. During the five-days seminar, we had in-depth conversations with media literacy experts, as well as representatives from the U.S. Department of State helped to identify current challenges and strategize cross-regional solutions to strengthen democracies through media literacy education.

Part of the Alumni TIES program is the opportunity for us as participants are to seek to enact initiatives within their own communities by applying for an Alumni TIES small grant and in partnership with at least one more Exchange Alumni. Please read more about the Alumni Ties 5-days seminar here: <https://alumnities.medium.com/building-a-global-community-of-media-literacy-activists-c400e1b8c1a7>

Please review carefully the 4 attached documents for our application for the Small Grant

- a. Alumni Ties Small Grants Program Instructions and Template (attached)
- b. Alumni Ties Small Grant Proposal Budget Template (attached)
- c. Alumni Ties Small Grant FAQ's (attached)
- d. Alumni Ties Small Grant Program Participant Manual (attached) - This pdf provides detailed clarification on the program and the scope of the Small Grant.

Previous programs Impact Stories to check as an inspiration:

<https://interactives.worldlearning.org/alumni-ties/>

The Alumni Ties Small Grant TEAM 2020

Greece

Associate Professor Betty Tsakarestou- Leader (SUSI 2015)

Lida Tsene - Team member (SUSI2 015)

Partner invitation:

Associate professor [Nikos Panagiotou](#), Aristotle University in Thessaloniki (Greece), Journalism Department, and [DCN SEE/Global Director](#)

India

[Dr. Mausumi Bhattacharyya](#), (SUSI 2016)

[Dr. Ankuran Dutta](#) (SUSI 2018)

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Alumni Ties Small Grant Proposal Idea/ Concept

The Idea/ Concept I am suggesting to work together as a team, is to address/tackle/ disrupt the powerful narrative and spreading of misinformation/ disinformation/ malinformation/ infodemic as well as conspiracy theories and alternate “truths” spreading in closed young group communities in Facebook and Messenger, in closed group communities in mobile and web messaging apps WhatsApp and Viber.

Our joint program and intervention will focus on engaging as Media and Information Literacy (MIL) leaders, influencers and co-creators, our university students in Greece and India, studying media, communication, journalism and digital storytelling. We shall work co-creatively to further outreach students of relevant studies across our countries and across borders.

Rationale: Research-based evidence is offering concerning insights on how siloed communities and groups in mobile and web apps such as WhatsApp and Viber and in closed/ private/ secret groups on Facebook and Facebook Messenger are offering a fertile environment for all types misinformation and conspiracies to spread and gain impetus both in Greece and India.

There is a white zone-gap in Digital media literacy intervention with a focus on such closed groups and communities, both in social media and mobile end-to-end encryption apps. We have a great opportunity to tap on this MIL gap and work together and with our students to prototype viable, sustainable and positive impact social interventions.

Title Project: "The Room Where it Happens" after Hamilton Musical

We should engage and inspire participant students in both countries, to engage them as leaders and influencers in questioning, and having an impact in changing the narrative among their peers.

Where: Digital Platform for training, collaboration, and co-creation of interventions
Simulations on closed groups communities in Facebook messenger.,Whatsapp/ Viber
Mapping the real world closed group communities
Real-world intervention and monitor impact making/ iterations on the go

Looking very much forward to start working altogether



Betty Tsakarestou
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Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences
Study of U.S. Institutes Alumna 2015
Alumni Thematic International Exchange Program 2020 Participant