

# CENTER FOR POLICY STUDIES

## INTERNATIONAL POLICY FELLOWSHIPS

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### MENTOR CRITIQUE FORM

Your thoughtful and honest appraisal will be most helpful. We appreciate your input and will try to implement as many of your ideas as possible. Continue comments on the back if necessary.

The IPF program pairs each Fellow with one or two mentors who are Soros foundations network-affiliated (usually Open Society Institute and Central European University), as well as one 'external' mentor who is an expert in the field working outside the Soros foundations network. Mentors should: 1) Work with Fellows to devise a brief policy paper in their field(s) of expertise based on a lengthy research paper written over the course of the fellowship year, 2) Maintain contact with Fellows at least once every six weeks or so by telephone, fax or e-mail to discuss the development of projects, 3) If feasible, meet with Fellows at least once during the fellowship year to discuss the project, 4) Facilitate Fellows' contact with other relevant experts and participation in appropriate meetings (IPF has discretionary funds to support Fellow attendance at relevant events), 5) Complete brief mid-term and final critique forms supplied by IPF to provide the program with feedback regarding the Fellow's progress.

Your name, position Dr Paul STUBBS, Senior Associate Researcher, Globalism and Social Policy Programme, University of Sheffield, UK and Social Development consultant, Zagreb, Croatia

Name of Fellow you have assisted Ms. Marina ŠKRABALO

**1. What, in your opinion, have you and your Fellow/program/project gained from your cooperation thus far?**

From Marina I have gained insight into the inter-relationship between theory and practice of peace-building in post-Yugoslav countries. I hope Marina has gained from me a view of the importance of integrating the study of peace building in a wider social context. Above all, Marina's use of some basic ideas from my own work 5 or 6 years ago, whilst flattering, cannot go without comment. Marina has re-read these fairly basic texts and taken ideas within them and strengthened them far more than I could have done.

**2. Do certain areas of this Fellow's work need improvement? Which areas?**

I would like to see greater analytical precision and political contextualisation of the global and regional policy agendas (UN; OECD(DAC); Canada; EU; G8) which are included in the first part of the paper. The summaries are extremely well written and make fascinating reading but there is a more complex story to be told here of the incorporation and rejection of diverse elements of an external academic and activist

agenda into diverse policy-making bodies. I would like the text to address questions such as:

How much have these agendas been influenced by the wars of the Yugoslav succession; by new governance and state building projects (in Kosovo, East Timor and now Afghanistan); by September 11 and its aftermath; and so on.

Also what are other agencies, particularly USAID, saying about peace building.

The only case study presented thus far (of Osijek Peace Centre) seems too uncritical – I know that the author has a more nuanced perspective and, although in the space available, this cannot be addressed in detail, I would like to see some pointers regarding the problematic issues.

**3. In your opinion, does your Fellow's project make a significant contribution to the field?**

YES

Without question, Marina is posing questions on the relationship between theory, praxis and practice on peace-building which few others are capable of, given her absorption and high level of competence in critical social science, critical evaluation practices, and realistic activist practices.

**4. Would the project be important to other countries in the CEE/fSU region?**

YES

The project will already cover all post-Yugoslav countries, but is clearly relevant to parts of fSU. Indeed, it might be worth having a section which looks at conflicts there which have had much less international attention (and less donor expenditure on bespoke peace building projects!).

**5. Could the proposed policy research make an impact on the policy environment in specific countries or regions? (Policy makers, experts and policy research community)**

YES

Marina's work could form the basis of a new link between policy making, research and activism. At the moment she is engaging with international actors in the paper but, later, she will engage with regional and national (especially Croatian) actors.

**6. Is the timetable for the project realistic?**

YES - NO

This is a very difficult question to answer. In a sense, by the end of the period envisaged, Marina will have masses of case material which she should be capable of synthesizing into a coherent policy paper. Indeed, I would encourage her to see the case studies as allowing for a new methodology of evaluation rather than to cover them in too much depth. But the sheer scale of ambitiousness of the project makes me think that the longer Marina has to work on this the better. In that sense, within the short time left, it would not be a tragedy for this IPF paper if some case studies, even some countries, were not covered as much as others.

**7. Could the project benefit a large number of people?**

YES

Both in terms of direct actors in peace building projects but also those living in communities in conflict. Greater clarity of purpose within peace building projects are urgently needed and this research will, undoubtedly, make a contribution here.

**8. Does the Fellow show evidence that he/she can think strategically about the relevant project and/or field?**

YES

Absolutely, this is the strength of the work thus far and, indeed, the brief descriptions of work yet to be undertaken, indicate that this will continue to be the major contribution of the project and its written manifestation.

**9. If the Fellow were to re-apply for continued OSI funding for follow-up work associated with the project, would you support continued funding?**

YES

Indeed, OSI should consider funding a longer-term action research project led by Marina with others working on data collection in particular countries.

**10. Are there other appropriate funders that may support the project?**

YES

Those interested in peace building research including LPI, Carnegie, Mott Foundation, etc.

**Recommendations for other potential senior contacts for this Fellow:**

**1. Martina Fischer and others at the Berghof Centre for Constructive Conflict Management, Berlin, Germany.**

**2. Michael Pugh, University of Plymouth, UK**

**Additional Comments (Please comment on your Fellow's work and all aspects of the IPF program using the back of this sheet):**

Marina's Interim Report is, of course, unfinished. But it is of great interest both in terms of a review of Policy perspectives and of theoretical issues, with a very creative use of the work of Lederach, Fetherstone and myself. Greater context at the global and regional levels would be useful. In addition, a more critical stance on case studies would help. The section on evaluation is excellent and could form the basis of an article in its own right. In the final report, I would like to see more emphasis on accounting for successful interventions, plus themes such as the role of different actors; gender issues; and so on. This is an exciting, dynamic, ambitious project which deserves a wide audience and critical engagement by diverse constituencies.

Paul Stubbs  
Zagreb 22 October 2002