



JLI is committed to working with our membership in support of the continued struggle to change narratives and pursue anti-racism. We are building off our [commitments to action for racial justice and solidarity](#). JLI is renewing a process to confront asymmetries of power in its research, joint learning and partnerships. We aim to increase participation and shift more power (resources and decision making) towards local movements and local faith communities.

As a result, JLI will develop new models of joint learning through regional and national hubs that are: inclusive of national and local languages, reaching out beyond traditional humanitarian and development organizations, and integrate fair and equitable approaches across research and practice. This process will be advised and guided by working groups as described below. Members and partners from the global south are particularly encouraged to apply whether or not you have been actively involved in the JLI previously.

[* JLI invites members and partners to share and/or apply by submitting an expression of interest for Fair and Equitable Working Groups. Submit by April 23rd*](#)

Background

Racist and colonial mindsets continue to permeate aid agencies and systems globally. One symptom is underestimating the capacities, social capital, leadership, expertise, networks and service provision of local faith communities and organizations. International faith-based organizations (FBOs) and secular partnerships can perpetuate these same asymmetries of power.

JLI aims to address issues such as a lack of acknowledgment of colonial legacies, the dominance of Western theological constructs, the marginalization of indigenous knowledge and belief, complicity in broader racist structures in aid and development, and inequity between local and international actors.

Confronting asymmetries of power is uncomfortable and requires Northern organizations to be willing to give up privilege and share power. JLI will strive to build a more racially diverse and geographically inclusive network of faith-based members to foster more equitable and inclusive joint learning platforms.

Agenda for change

JLI will focus on three priorities over the next 24 months, as part of an ongoing commitment to re-envision its partnerships and joint learning platforms.

1. **Regional listening dialogues:** led by local and national faith actors to critically reflect on diversity, equity and inclusion in JLI's joint learning models, by confronting asymmetries of power and identifying ways to change. The dialogues will inform and guide JLI and its members to reshape joint learning models that prioritize the research agendas of global south partners.
2. **Global webinar series:** interactive public learning events, bringing together academics and practitioners from across different regions and perspectives to discuss critical questions to make joint learning more fair and equitable in religions and development research.
3. **Theological dialogue:** bringing together theologians, scholars, academics and development practitioners from diverse contexts to share different theologies, teachings, spiritual insights and lived experiences of relevance to decolonization.

Each of the three priorities will have a working group to discuss, guide and support the respective activities. These groups will be held in a common working language with translation available. [See [Annex 1-3 for Fair and Equitable Working Group TORs](#). Regional listening dialogues will have a working group focused on the design and facilitation of the sessions to enhance their potential. The global webinar series will have a working group focused on communications and outreach. The theological dialogues will constitute a working group in themselves, providing space for debate and exchange. Each group will meet for two years, once every two months, to lead these three distinct but interconnected processes.

JLI Fair and Equitable Working Groups - Call for Applications

Expression of Interest

JLI is inviting both members and other interested organizations and individuals to join one of the three working groups. Up to 8 people will be selected for each group applying the following criteria:

- Prioritizing local agencies and organizations working directly with local faith-based and secular organizations. Honoraria will be provided.

- Promoting gender equality to ensure (where possible) representation across other intersectional issues, including disability, age, sexuality and religion.
- Including representatives of agencies and networks with experience across sectors which may include anti-racism, intersectionality, localization, etc.

Please apply to join one of the working groups by [completing the survey and sending a CV to research@jliflc.com](#). If you have any questions, please reach out to research@jliflc.com. See below for the terms of reference for each group. The deadline for expressions of interest is April 23rd.

Note: Many JLI members are already actively engaged in critical dialogue on decolonization through their respective professional and faith-based networks. JLI will seek to learn from these complementary processes and identify opportunities for JLI members to participate in the range of other public events on decolonization that fall outside the working groups' scope.

The working group selection process will include the JLI Secretariat and select members of the JLI Board. The JLI Secretariat will provide logistical, coordination and advisory support to each of the working groups

Annex 1 - Regional Listening Dialogues Advisory TOR

The purpose of regional listening dialogues is to reflect on diversity critically, equity and inclusion in JLI's joint learning models, confront asymmetries of power and identify ways to change. The dialogues will inform and guide JLI and its members to reshape collaborative learning models that are more diverse and prioritize global south partners' research agendas. Feedback from the regional dialogues will support the design of pilots for new JLI learning and influencing models. The Working Group's purpose is to help design and shape the ways that the dialogues will work.

Objectives:

1. Design and shape the listening dialogues, providing advice on how best to shift power in joint learning models in varied languages and contexts to enable local leadership to shape agendas and resource them to do so.
2. Expand the JLI network's reach beyond traditional humanitarian and development organizations to ensure the dialogues are open and inclusive.

Outcomes:

- Inform a re-evaluation of JLI's joint learning model and shape a new model for the listening dialogues that is fair and equitable.
- Agree on measurable actions to put the listening dialogues in place in ways that will shift power and agency in JLI's joint learning approach.
- Identify how the regional listening dialogues' outputs can feed into long-term fair and equitable joint learning approaches for JLI.

Terms of office: Commit to convening 7-14 days over two years

Tasks

- Guide the listening dialogues' design by developing a basic framework for all listening dialogues that will be revised to fit regional contexts. The framework will ensure that information and insights generated are pertinent to JLI's change agenda and overall mandate and consider prior work by JLI and its members.
- Identify and nominate remunerated scholars and practitioners to design and facilitate five regional listening dialogues. Members of the working group may also opt to deliver and directly participate in any individual regional listening dialogues.
- Review five regional consultation papers (outputs of the regional dialogues) that critically interrogate JLI structures, priorities, funding/resources and processes and support feedback to existing hubs and new regional learning hubs or advisory groups. Global findings would be reported only as a summary.
- Participate in the discussion at JLI Leadership Hub (launching in Oct 2021) annually (or bi-annually) to inform ongoing steps to decolonize JLI; new models of joint learning, research prioritization, fundraising and resource allocation, knowledge brokering and dissemination.
- Connect with parallel conversations and movements amongst aid agencies on anti-racism, critical race theory, intersectionality, localization, including creating links to academic or implementing partnerships.

Annex 2 Global Webinar Series Working Group TOR

JLI will support increased communication and outreach through a series of interactive public learning events, bringing together academics and practitioners from across different regions and perspectives to discuss critical questions for decolonizing research and joint learning partnerships in religions and development. The webinar series will create space for debate and opportunities for members to think about this issue in their own organizations and contexts.

Objectives

1. Communicate learning and emerging good practice from across JLI members and the broader sector on decolonization, power, and privilege, including how fair and equitable approaches to research and evidence on religion and development can increase local faith communities' impact.
2. Inform research prioritization and potential funding partnerships for new research on the intersection of faith and decolonizing development and its impact on sustainable development.

Outcomes:

- Engage JLI membership in the shift to fair and equitable research and learning, providing a space for discussing new ideas and initiatives.
- Expand the reach of webinars beyond JLI membership to connect with parallel processes for decolonizing research, learning, policy and advocacy partnerships.
- Inform future policy and practice papers on fair and equitable partnerships and other knowledge products that explicitly challenge racist and colonial frameworks.

Tasks:

- Advise on the thematic focus of the webinar series.

- Suggest speakers (working group members may also choose to be speakers themselves).
- Liaise with the working group on the listening dialogue to integrate findings into the evidence and analysis for panel discussions.
- Promote webinar series within member's own professional and faith-based networks.
- Expand network outreach to diversify JLI membership engagement (including outreach beyond membership).

Annex 3 Theological Dialogue on Decolonization TOR

JLI will convene a discussion series to explore the importance of different religious and spiritual beliefs for decolonization. This working group will hold a series of online discussions bringing together theologians, scholars, academics and development practitioners from diverse contexts to share different theologies, teachings, spiritual insights and lived experiences of relevance to decolonization.

Objectives:

1. Create space for debate and joint learning across different contexts and religions to understand better the complex relationship between theology, teachings, beliefs, power and oppression.
2. Build mutual learning between indigenous scholars and practitioners working across different postcolonial theories, theologies, and religions.
3. Explore the influence of theologies of race and gender on decolonized partnerships, including the importance of lived experiences' in shaping postcolonial theologies.
4. Generate multi-religious reflections on decolonization to resource members to think about this issue in their own organizations and contexts.

Tasks:

- Choose prioritized topics for the dialogues.
- Identify and convene scholars and practitioners with an interest in postcolonial theories and theologies to participate.
- Collate insights, evidence and analysis.
- Communicate insights through JLI Hubs, FBOs and interdisciplinary publications (for example, academic journal articles or series).
- Liaise with the working group leading on the regional listening dialogues to integrate findings into the evidence and analysis for panel discussions.
- Create links to discussions within members' own professional and faith-based networks.