Understanding Islam in Irish Education
The Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) was launched in 2005 and aims to bring people together from across the Mediterranean to improve mutual respect between cultures. The main scope of the ALF is overcoming the misunderstandings and stereotypes which affect relations between and within the societies of the Region. As a contribution to the creation of a space of prosperity, coexistence and peace, the ALF works to restore trust in dialogue and bridge the gaps in mutual perceptions, as well as promoting diversity and coexistence.

Through its action and reflection the ALF aims to contribute to the development of an Intercultural Strategy for the Euro-Mediterranean Region, providing recommendations to decision-makers and institutions and advocating for shared values.

http://www.euromedalex.org
"Network of networks"

ALF aim is "...to improve the knowledge and understanding of different cultures"
Established 2005

In 43 countries

3000 member organisations

60 members in Ireland network
2013 ALF Focus

Youth   Women
The Chester Beatty Library is a unique art museum and library housing a great collection of manuscripts, miniature paintings, prints, drawings, rare books and decorative arts left in the care of a board of trustees with financial support by the Irish government by Sir Alfred Chester Beatty in 1969. The collection spans from across Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and Europe offering visitors a visual feast, its exhibitions opens a window on the artistic treasures of many world cultures and religions. The Library’s mission statement wishes to engage with the multi-ethnic communities as represented in the collections and is actively involved in intercultural dialogue projects with community groups based primarily in Dublin as well exhibiting on annual basis thematic exhibitions from its own and visiting collections.
Jenny Siung
Head of Education, Chester Beatty Library
Head Irish Network, Anna Lindh Foundation
A centre for intercultural dialogue and learning through exhibitions and learning programmes

Unique in Irish context and addresses new Irish identity through its programmes

Exhibitions comprise of Sacred Traditions: Islam, Christianity and Buddhism and Artistic Traditions: Islamic, East Asian and European cultures as reflected in books and decorative arts

Promotes intercultural learning by working with diverse communities as reflected in the collections
Welcome to the website of Mary Immaculate College (MIC). Founded in 1898, MIC is a Catholic College of Education and the Liberal Arts. The College offers a wide range of programmes in Education and the Liberal Arts at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and over 3,000 students are engaged in studies here.
Prof Michael Hayes
President of MIC

Need to learn from each other
Christianity, Islam and Judaism have a shared father in faith - Abraham
2nd Vatican Council: Christians have much to learn from other faiths including the truth found in other faiths.
"Education must be about rememberence and preservation of knowledge and also replicating and understanding the process of its creation"
A centre for intercultural dialogue and learning through exhibitions and learning programmes
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Promotes intercultural learning by working with diverse communities as reflected in the collections

Ali Salem
Islamic Cultural Centre in Ireland

Identity & Education
"...Most muslims see their religious identity as a social layer, and as that basis on which they can organise their relation between one another as individuals, to others as groups and the relation as individuals to the state..."
People have multiple layers, each of which engages with the world around them.
"Education moulds our identity and equips future generations as individuals and as members of society to live together"
Education needs to:

- **Encourage** students to have their religious identity
- **To accept** people have different layers of social identity
- **Educate** citizens about their multiple layers of identity
Professor Maria Parker-Jenkins
University of Limerick

"immigration and migration are in flux, but diversity is here to stay!"
How can I be a good teacher when I don’t know anything about my students background?

I’m Malaysian
Muslim

I’m Pakistani
Hindu

I’m Christian
Arab

Intercultural Education in Ireland

Islam
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 18.

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.
Fundamental Rights under the Irish Constitution

Religious liberty

Your are free to practise your religion and your freedom of conscience. The State guarantees not to endow or favour any religion and not to discriminate on the grounds of religion.

State aid for schools cannot discriminate between schools of different religious denominations. Every child has the right to attend a denominational school receiving State funding without having to participate in religious instruction in the school.

Your right to religious liberty may be limited to protect public order and morality.
Migration in Ireland

Between 2002 to 2006
the Muslim population
increased by 70%
Islam is...

- Submission to Allah, through Allah a Muslim enters peace
- Diverse
- A world-wide religion
- An all embracing way of life
- A spiritual community - “Ummah”
5 basic duties of a Muslim

- Declaration of faith
- 5 compulsory Daily prayers
- Welfare contributions
- Pilgrimage to Mecca
- Fasting during Ramadan
**Tips for educators:**

- Develop "religious literacy" by engaging with the community around you.
- Consider a dress policy for staff and students.
- Remember that the child/student is an individual.
Susan Douglass,
Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, Washington DC

- What is Islam?
- Diversity
- Role of Educators
- Resources
1. It is **not** a religion of desert and Bedouin

2. It did **not** spread rapidly nor did people convert to Islam at a point of sword

3. It is **not** a monolithic but diverse in ethnicity, religion and language

4. It is **not** a closed society
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Islam emerged in the Arabian Peninsula - surrounded by water

Islam, Judaism and Christianity all arose in this single geographical area

All three are based on revelation from god

Arabia is a bridge between land and water, linking people, ideas and faith.
Muslim conquest was rapid,
but the spread of Islam was slow
There was constant and continual cultural interaction and exchange over many centuries.
"...God has baked diversity into the cake of creation. Live with it! we are not here to force others or convince others to be all alike...but rather to celebrate our diversity..."
The role of educators is to make people religious literate*
a religiously literate person has:

Basic understanding of the history, central text (where they exist), beliefs, practices, and contemporary, manifestations of the world's religious traditions and religious expressions in particular social, historical and cultural context.

the ability to discern and explore the religious dimensions of political and cultural expressions across time and place.
 السلام عليكم
Ma asalama
peace be with you
visual harvest by:

THINK VISUAL