



ISPU

# 2016

Annual Report





*Where We Worked in 2016*

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# Dear Supporters & Partners,

*Research making an impact is the founding principle of ISPU. In 2016, you helped ISPU achieve impact.*

In March, we released our first annual American Muslim Poll (AMP), an evidence-based portrait of American Muslims alongside Americans of other faith groups. AMP provided insight on religiosity, civic engagement, and voting patterns that informed media and policy makers and mobilized voters. Impactful work, cited by experts, shaping the narrative.

In October, we released our Reimagining Muslim Spaces findings and case studies, providing religious centers with models and characteristics of inclusive mosques that better meet the needs of their diverse communities. Interactive workshops introduced community leaders to the findings, allowing them to use the information to rethink assumptions and adapt, strengthen, and build community.

And in November, we launched our Muslims for American Progress (MAP) project, highlighting the contributions of American Muslims to the health, happiness, and well-being of their fellow Americans. The resulting MAP stories, video, and data challenged assumptions about American Muslims. Informing and educating, promoting pluralism, reflecting the best of our country.

A year of research making an impact.

2017 is a milestone year for ISPU—our fifteenth. We enter the year focused and strong, with the ability to produce impactful work and a mandate to do so. There is no other organization that does what we do—conduct objective, solution-seeking research on the challenges and opportunities facing American Muslims—and today our work is more important than ever. ISPU’s mission has always been vital, but the events of 2016 brought into sharper focus not only the importance of ISPU’s work but its urgency.

In 2017, we plan to build capacity so that we can do more, increase our sustainability so that we will be around for many years to come, and most importantly, increase our impact so that we can continue to work toward a truly pluralistic America where Muslims are strong and equal participants. As you read this annual report, we hope you share our pride in what we have achieved together. Thank you for investing in our future.

Yours Sincerely,

**Meira Neggaz,**  
*Executive Director*

**Saima Siddiqui,**  
*Board Chair*



# Mission & Vision

ISPU conducts objective, solution-seeking research that empowers American Muslims to develop their community and fully contribute to democracy and pluralism in the United States.

Our vision is a vibrant and truly pluralistic America, where Muslims are strong and equal participants.



“

*ISPU is ammunition in this campaign to deal with misinformation, misunderstanding, and a poverty of relationships. Because for some people they need more than just a picture, they need more than just my saying something — they need data.*

- Steve Spreitzer,  
Michigan Roundtable  
for Diversity

“

*ISPU's work is a lifesaver. I use ISPU's stats and data to educate a whole host of groups. Even when I meet groups skeptical of the challenges facing Muslims, ISPU's data usually wins the day. It has helped countless times.*

- Mohamed Shukri,  
Daban Consulting

“

*I think it's great to have debates about this within the Muslim community. . . . That's precisely the role I think orgs like ISPU can play, that fine-grained understanding of internal Muslim community dynamics and how to have these debates in a way that isn't polarizing but rather constructive.*

- Shadi Hamid,  
Brookings Fellow

## • Our Impact 2016 •

This year, ISPU's solution-seeking research educated and enabled community change agents, the media, policy makers, and the general public nationwide.

### We Discover

ISPU addressed **19 challenges** with **9** research projects.



We partnered with **126 EXPERTS** to conduct research and provide thought leadership.



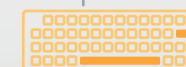
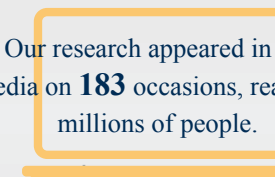
**95%** of those we surveyed found ISPU research to be **RELEVANT**.



### We Educate

ISPU directly reached more than **8,000** people through over **80** events and connected regularly with over **20,000** people online.

Our research appeared in the media on **183** occasions, reaching millions of people.



We increased our social media presence by **109%** which resulted in **2,311,697** impressions.



### We Enable

ISPU connected **169** policy makers and community leaders with new resources and information impacting the lives of

**Millions of Americans**



**89%** of those we surveyed said that ISPU research is **APPLICABLE**.



# Our Social Policy Work Built Community Capacity & Strengthened Families

Our Generation 9/11 series brought together a brain trust of experts to address five major challenges facing young American Muslims, from how to keep your kids safe online to increasing religious literacy to preventing and treating drug abuse. The group's findings and recommendations were shared nationwide, empowering mosque leaders, youth program directors, and parents to support healthy youth development.

With our Reimagining Muslim Spaces project, ISPU offered individual case studies and focus group analysis in order to provide a roadmap for creating welcoming and well-governed religious spaces that are hubs for hope.

The findings and recommendations were shared with mosque leaders and congregants at ISNA's 2016 national conference, the IONA conference, and the ISNA Mosque Forum, co-sponsored by ISPU. At each, through ISPU-led workshops based on the research findings, participants created action plans for improving their own religious spaces.

In addition, ISPU released important research on challenges stemming from aging within the American Muslim community and published a timely look at mental health among American-born Muslim young adults.



2016 ISNA National Conference

Understanding Inclusivity Practices at "Third Spaces"

Meeting the Needs of Generation 9/11 Getting Race Right

American Muslim Youth Convening Report Series

“ This case study along with the others in the RMS series will definitely be a huge asset for organizations striving to do similar things. ”

-SHARE Center Lexington



Imam Hassan Selim, photo by Braden Kopf

# An Imam Embraces Inclusivity

Imam Hassan Selim has led the Islamic Center for Cedar Rapids for more than four years. Like many in his position, he is tasked with forming a more inclusive mosque, one that can assist an always changing and diverse community in often challenging times. One recurring obstacle was the lack of real-life examples of mosques that had overcome these same challenges.

Imam Selim learned of ISPU, and our Reimagining Muslim Spaces (RMS) project, while attending a conference where our research was being presented by Executive Director Meira Neggaz.

According to Selim, “I was familiar with ISPU’s work, but had no idea how well it would fit the challenges I was facing until I heard ISPU’s presentation. Through the RMS report series, I was able to match my religious training and knowledge with practical examples, best practices, and guidelines on how to achieve inclusiveness and civic engagement in my mosque. ISPU research took an abstract Islamic idea/ideal and presented it as a reality.”

Imam Selim shared ISPU’s research with his incoming board, used ISPU research to coordinate the use of his mosque as an early voting center, and plans to use another RMS report to encourage the forming of a free clinic. He also, following a specific recommendation from our “Creating a Welcoming, Inclusive, Dynamic Mosque” report, championed the appointment of a woman as the chairperson of his mosque.

“ I was convinced that appointing a woman as the chairperson would be a sign of, and a step towards, creating an inclusive mosque. Knowing that there is no religious issue with the matter, I advised that this would be a step in the right direction. Now, we are proud to have a Muslim woman as our chairperson. ISPU’s reports give precise guidelines, and clear and real examples, and should be read by every imam across the country.”

**- Imam Hassan Selim, Islamic Center for Cedar Rapids**

# Our Public Policy Work Energized Policy Makers, Voters, and Media Professionals

In 2016, we amplified the voices of American Muslims nationwide with the release of our first ever American Muslim Poll. And our American Muslims in the 2016 Elections and Beyond report set out to discover why Muslims should be civically and politically engaged in the 2016 elections, how to go about increasing engagement, and what policy priorities were most important to American Muslim communities. We also launched our Muslims for American Progress project to discover and quantify the contributions of American Muslims living in the state of Michigan. Early findings from this project were used to show the Muslim response to the Flint Water Crisis, which were given to senior White House officials prior to President Obama's visit to Flint.

Our work in 2016 changed the way American Muslims were seen in a year overrun with calls for condemnation, not celebration. The American Muslim Poll in particular provided a badly needed, evidence-based voice to an often misinformed conversation. Throughout 2016, the poll's research findings educated voters, having been cited in at least 60 different news publications, including a CBS News special. It also underpinned efforts to combat bullying in schools, train educators and law enforcement, and inform governmental agencies and White House officials. It enabled professors, policy makers, educators, interfaith partners, activists, and advocates to use findings in their own important work, ultimately countering fear with facts.



Meira Neggaz at the American Muslim Poll launch

*“I refer to ISPU's American Muslim Poll when I give public talks on Islamophobia. It helps to nuance the picture of American Muslims and to challenge unfair stereotypes concerning Islam's compatibility with the U.S. Keep up the outstanding work!”*

- Prof. Todd Green



Rep. Keith Ellison discussing the need for ISPU's research



## Informing Congress

For Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN), ISPU research is an invaluable resource. For him, “ISPU produces information, poll data, and studies that allow me to propose policy that’s based on fact.” In 2016, we released our American Muslim Poll, which examined the attitudes of Muslims, Jews, Protestants, and Catholics on topics ranging from politics and religion to violence and identity.

For Congressman Ellison, our poll results offered something vitally necessary. “The most recent poll is incredibly helpful. I’ve referenced it a number of times in Congress, especially to show that mosque attendance is associated with civic engagement and not with radicalization. Some of my colleagues found this to be surprising, but I said ‘here’s the data.’ In this way, ISPU is a tremendous resource which allows us to speak authoritatively and intelligently on the basis of fact.”

Roughly half of Americans say they don’t know a Muslim. And when 80 percent of news coverage about Islam and Muslims in the United States is negative, the result is a climate where the majority of American Muslims report some level of discrimination. ISPU’s American Muslim Poll helps the fight against rising Islamophobia by educating the public and enabling activists and policy makers alike.

“

If you’re a policy maker, an activist, or just a citizen who wants to know what’s going on, this poll is excellent information.

- Keith Ellison, Congressman (D-MN)




From left to right: Muqtedar Khan, Kamran Bokhari, Mehdi Hasan, Dawud Walid, and Sahar Aziz




## We Were Highly Influential Providing Thought Leadership

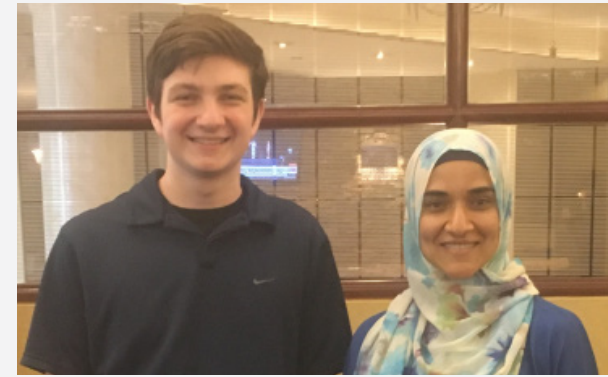
ISPU hosted a debate at ISNA 2016 focused on the net benefits or harm to Muslim communities of engaging with law enforcement on countering violent extremism programs. With 700 people in attendance and over 7,000 views on Facebook, the debate started a much-needed conversation in the media, online, and in the community at large.

In addition, ISPU reached tens of millions of people through platforms like the TED stage and *The Daily Show*. And through sharing our research with aspiring and elected government officials, we informed strategic visioning for the future, ensuring that American Muslims' concerns are addressed.

 *Yasmin Abdulatheem @YasminAtheem*  
I'm here and can testify it's an EXHILARATING debate. #ISNA53

 *Hanan Dover @HananDover1*  
It was a good debate to watch. A needed debate. Thank you. I enjoyed it all the way from Australia.

 *Omid Safi @ostadjaa*  
Fascinating debate on the pluses and minuses of #CVE at #ISNA53



Pat McGarry with ISPU's Director of Research, Dalia Mogahed

## An Inspired Student

ISPU provides thought leadership by populating timely national discussions with Muslim voices and voices that are knowledgeable about the needs and desires of the American Muslim community. In 2016, ISPU's thought leadership was amplified in an unexpected way.

On January 7, 2016, many watched ISPU's Director of Research, Dalia Mogahed, on *The Daily Show*. Among these was 16-year-old Pat McGarry, a high school sophomore from New Jersey. Pat was moved to learn of the discrimination suffered by American Muslims. As an aspiring filmmaker, he knew just what to do.

Pat researched ISPU via our website and other articles. He used what he learned to make a film, "How to Be an American Muslim: A Satire," which he entered into the Robert F. Kennedy Speak Truth to Power film contest. His film won first prize, which carried with it a screening at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York City.



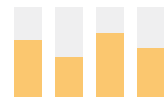
Pat McGarry at the Tribeca Film Festival

**“There’s no how to being an American Muslim. You just are. And it’s at moments like these, when to be Muslim you have to overcome physical threats, that people like Dalia Mogahed matter the most.**

- How to Be an American Muslim: A Satire

This film, which has now been watched more than 12,000 times on Vimeo, and Dalia's *Daily Show* appearance both stand as examples of how ISPU research can reach people in surprising and impactful ways. For Pat, the decision to champion ISPU was an easy one: "Dalia Mogahed and ISPU help people who are ignorant to the culture realize that Muslims are peaceful, everyday people."

# Financial Report



2016  
Expenditure  
Breakdown  
↓

Revenue	2015 (audited)	2016 (unaudited)
Institutional Grants*	\$1,369,000	\$284,001
Individual Contributions	\$156,132	\$228,509
Event Revenue (net of expenses)	\$171,914	\$227,621
In-Kind Donations	\$17,021	\$6,298
Other	-\$14	\$495
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,714,053</b>	<b>\$746,924</b>

Expenses	2015 (audited)	2016 (unaudited)
Programs / Research	\$495,888	\$735,562
Fundraising	\$152,624	\$193,024
Administration	\$119,829	\$107,364
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$768,341</b>	<b>\$1,035,950</b>

Assets	2015 (audited)	2016 (unaudited)
Net Assets (beginning of year)	\$616,441	\$1,532,153
Net Assets (end of year)	\$1,562,153	\$1,273,127
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$945,712</b>	<b>-\$289,026</b>

Programs / Research

71%

Fundraising

19%

Administration

10%

## Thank You

Next year, we are celebrating ISPU's 15th anniversary. We are so grateful for all of you who made this milestone possible. We could not have done it without you. Thank you!

We count on your support, and you can count on us to deliver solution-seeking research for and about American Muslims. ISPU's research challenges stereotypes by presenting facts and data, provides a platform for American Muslims to tell their stories, and identifies pathways forward for some of the most pressing challenges.

Through our research, we educate the public and enable our partners, raising awareness on critical issues impacting American Muslims.

Every dollar you donate to ISPU goes a long way. If you have been an ISPU supporter, we thank you and are looking forward to your continued support in 2017 and beyond. If you have yet to give, now is the time to start supporting ISPU. Your gift of any amount will make a difference.

Thank you!



**Amal Beydoun,**  
Senior Development Manager

\*In 2015, ISPU was awarded several multi-year grants to be expended in subsequent years. Following generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), the entire amount of the granted funds were recorded as income in 2015 while the expenses were recorded throughout the life of the multi-year grants.

# Our Team

## Staff

**Meira Neggaz,**  
*Executive Director*

**Dalia Mogahed,**  
*Director of Research*

**Nadia Ahmed,**  
*Director of Finance*

**Amal Beydoun,**  
*Senior Development Manager*

**Stephen McGrath,**  
*Senior Communications Manager*

**Aamina Ahmed,**  
*Development & Database Specialist*

**Sarrah Buageila,**  
*Research Project Manager*

**Katie Grimes,**  
*Communications Associate*

**Butheina Hamdah,**  
*Development Associate*

**Maryam Jamali,**  
*Research Manager*

**Hana Mattar,**  
*Development and Administrative Assistant*

## Board of Directors

**Iltefat Hamzavi,**  
*Board Chair, Michigan*

**Muzammil Ahmed,**  
*Vice Chair, Michigan*

**Aamir A. Rehman,**  
*Treasurer, New York*

**Nauman Imami,**  
*Secretary, Michigan*

**Sara Abbasi,**  
*California*

**Mustafa Ahmed,**  
*Florida*

**Mazen Asbahi,**  
*Illinois*

*ISPU's dedicated staff members are based in Washington, DC, and Dearborn, MI. Our network of over 40 scholars brings depth, excellence, and reach to ISPU's work. The support and leadership of 14 national board members and an 8-member board of advisors allows ISPU to catalyze community development, build bridges, and inspire problem-solving and forward thinking nationwide.*

## Board of Advisors

**Akbar Ahmed,**  
*American University*

**Hon. David E. Bonior,**  
*Former Congressman*

**John Esposito,**  
*Georgetown University*

**Muneer Fareed,**  
*University of Cape Town*

**Sherman Jackson,**  
*University of Southern California*

**Aminah McCloud,**  
*DePaul University*

**Sulayman Nyang,**  
*Howard University*

**James Piscatori,**  
*Durham University*

## Scholars

**Hassan Abbas**  
*National Defense University's College of International Security Affairs*

**Abbas Barzegar**  
*Georgia State University*

**Hatem Bazian**  
*University of California, Berkeley*

**Alejandro Beutel**  
*National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)*

**Louise Cainkar**  
*Marquette University*

**Karam Dana**  
*Middle East Center University of Washington*

**Manijeh Daneshpour**  
*Alliant International University*

**Omar Ezzeldine**  
*Los Angeles County Office of Education*

**Ihsan Bagby**  
*University of Kentucky*

**Kathleen Foley**  
*Founder and Principal of Mirador Consulting, LLC*

**Hamada Hamid**  
*Yale University*

**Ben Herzig**  
*Psychologist in private practice*

**Ahmed Humayun**  
*Georgetown University ISIS Center*

**Daniel Hummel**  
*Idaho State University*

**Altaf Husain**  
*Howard University School of Social Work*

**Arsalan Iftikhar**  
*International human rights lawyer and global media commentator*

**Muqtedar Khan**  
*University of Delaware*

**Saeed Khan**  
*Wayne State University*

**Amal Killawi**  
*The Family and Youth Institute (FYI)*

**Lance Laird**  
*Boston University*

**Erik Love**  
*Dickinson College*

**Julie Macfarlane**  
*University of Windsor Faculty of Law*

**Faiqa Mahmood**  
*Stimson Center*

**Haroon Moghul**  
*Internationally recognized expert on Islam, U.S. foreign policy and religious identity*

**Hadia Mubarak**  
*University of North Carolina*

**Aasim Padela**  
*University of Chicago*

**Asifa Quraishi-Landes**  
*University of Wisconsin Law School*

**Zahra S.A. Rafie**  
*NOVA Community College*

**Louay Safi**  
*Hamad bin Khalifa University and Center for Muslim Christian Understanding*

**Muniba Saleem**  
*Institute for Social Research*

**Sikander Ahmed Shah**  
*LUMS University*

**Tasneem Siddiqui**  
*Winston-Salem State University*

**Abdulkader Sinno**  
*Indiana University*

**SpearIt**  
*Thurgood Marshall School of Law*

**Daniel Tutt**  
*Marymount University and Unity Productions Foundation*

**Asma Uddin**  
*Center for Islam and Religious Freedom*

**John Voll**  
*Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding*

**Radwan Ziadeh**  
*United States Institute for Peace and John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University*



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Released in November 2016, our video  
“An America Without Muslims?” has been viewed  
online more than

**280,000**  
times.

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Thank you for the good work you do, especially with the recent data on American Muslim political views and participation during this important election cycle. It’s wonderful (critical, really!) to have objective, well-researched reports based on actual data vetted by qualified scholars and experts in the field. This is so helpful to me as a public speaker and advocate on behalf of the Muslim community.

**- Zaynab Ansari**

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### ***Learn, Give, Connect***

www.ispu.org



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Since 2002, ISPU has produced

**1,019**

total publications.

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