



## Oxford Internet Institute

### ***Civil Society Practitioners Programme - six week residency in Oxford***

The Oxford Internet Institute (University of Oxford) is seeking two policy advocates active within the civil society sector in the global south to join our Visitor programme.

Our Visitor programme is intended for established scholars, industry leaders, practitioners, civil society advocates and policy makers of distinction or outstanding promise, who wish to visit the OII for a limited period to study or pursue research concerning the social impact of the Internet and related ICTs. Thanks to a demonstration project support grant of 50, 000 USD from the media policy portfolio in the Knowledge, Creativity and Freedom Program of the Ford Foundation, we are able to offer two places of up to six weeks each during 2008 to **eligible civil society practitioners active in the areas of freedom of expression, media reform, media justice, and/or communications and information policy in a globalized context of the Internet.**

The Civil Society Practitioners Programme is intended to serve as model to be used for other similar such initiatives between universities and the civil society sector, fostering cross-pollination of ideas and collaboration between Internet researchers in university based settings such as the OII, and Internet policy advocates active within the civil society sector in the global South.

### ***Information for Applicants***

#### **Eligibility**

To apply you should meet the following minimum criteria:

- Are a citizen from and/or resident in the global South;
- have at least three years of demonstrated practical experience in your area of advocacy;
- your application must be supported by your employing organisation, acknowledging that leave will be granted to you for purposes of participating in the OII's Visitor Programme.

To benefit fully from the residency, education to Masters degree level or equivalent would be an advantage but is not essential.

Meeting these criteria does not guarantee shortlisting for, nor award of, a funded place in the OII Civil Society Practitioners Programme.

## **Applications**

Applications should contain the following:

- A proposal (see Proposal Specifications below), explaining why you are applying, how you meet the selection criteria and detailing the specific aims for your visit (not exceeding one A4 page);
- Letters from two referees confirming how your experience and qualifications meet the selection criteria (see below);
- A supporting letter from your employing organisation confirming that leave will be granted to you for purposes of participating in the OII's Visitor Programme;
- An up to date Curriculum Vitae (not exceeding three A4 pages);
- A sample of written work undertaken by you within the course of your advocacy work (for example a report or study; if multi-authored, please state the extent of your contribution). (Any documents not in English must be accompanied by an English translation);
- A covering letter setting out your full name and contact details (email address; 'phone number); Nationality; Country of residence; dates of your proposed visit; contact details for your employing organisation and for your referees (email, phone, fax and postal addresses).

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

### **Proposal specification**

- Name or topic of the proposed research project or study to be undertaken during your visit;
- A brief statement (two or three sentences) of the purpose and nature of the proposed study;
- The significance of the issue addressed by your project;
- How your research will address the issue;
- How the issue relates to your advocacy work, and why you are qualified to undertake the project;
- Novelty and utility of your project vis à vis existing research;
- Information about those who will be helped by and interested in the work and how you will communicate with them.

To give you some examples of the sort of research projects or studies that could be undertaken during your visit, they might include the use of the Internet or related electronic information and communications technologies in: promotion of freedom of expression and media pluralism, or in development of community media, or in human resource development (capacity building of media professionals and institutional capacity building), etc. Or they might include: developing a better, actionable account of the role of 'new media' in people's lives or evaluating advocacy or organizing strategies around communications and media issues. These examples are not exhaustive and any study concerning the social impact of the Internet and related ICTs in the areas of freedom of expression, media reform, media justice, and/or communications and information policy will be considered.

## Selection criteria

Your application will be considered under the following criteria. You should address these points in your proposal and your referees should also address them in their references:

1. How your proposed visit will be relevant to the study of the role of the Internet in your advocacy domain; include a clear plan for the application of research findings in policy-making processes or advocacy campaigns.
2. How your proposed work will further the OII's aims of informing and influencing the debate that is shaping Internet research, policy, and practice around the world through high-quality research, collaboration, teaching, and/or use of the Internet as a strategic resource;
3. Whether and how your research stay at the OII could be useful for organizations, communities, and advocacy efforts beyond your organization.
4. Your ability to benefit from the opportunity to study during your proposed visit, as evidenced by the sample of your written work.
5. How your proposed area of study relates to the work of the OII and to one or more of its current research foci. These foci are: the role of the Internet and ICTs in: everyday life and work; governance and democracy; science and learning; shaping the Internet; and/or policy issues that cut across all these social settings (see <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/research/> for further details);
6. Evidence of distinction or outstanding promise in your chosen field.
7. Evidence of strong communication skills in spoken and written English.

## Deadline for applications

Applications must reach the OII preferably by email (to [recruit@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:recruit@oii.ox.ac.uk)), or by post (see address below) by **12:00 noon BST on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2007**. The e-mail or envelope should clearly indicate "Civil Society Practitioners Programme".

We will notify successful candidates in early November and you will be expected to take up your six week residency in Oxford at any time between February and December 2008.

## The successful candidates' contribution

During your stay you will participate fully in the intellectual life of the OII, engaging in general discussion about OII research, teaching initiatives, events or policy publications, as appropriate; you will present (at least) one seminar, and contribute to the understanding of the OII researchers of the needs of and uses for the Internet in the civil society practitioner community.

You will enjoy the time and space for personal research and will benefit from opportunities for engaging with OII faculty as well as participating in the department's lively academic events programme. The Project Coordinator for the OII's Civil Society Practitioner Visitor Programme will act as host for the duration of your residency period, so as to facilitate your study plans. She will also help you set up contacts with academic and research staff in the wider university which benefits from active study programmes in such areas as International Development, Migration and Refugee studies, African, Latin American, Brazilian, and contemporary Chinese Area studies, International Gender studies, and Development Economics. The latter list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive.

Upon completion of your visit, you will need to write a report reflecting on your experience of the visit, with recommendations for subsequent iterations of what is hoped will become a longer term scheme replicated also in other universities around the world. In turn, your presence as a Civil Society Practitioner within the OII is expected to help inform and invigorate our research agenda, as well as in facilitating greater interaction between the civil society practitioner community and the academic community resident at and affiliated with the OII.

### **Aims of the Civil Society Practitioner Visitor Programme**

- Increased collaboration and idea-exchange between researchers investigating the Internet and civil society practitioners.
- Reports from the Civil Society Practitioners on what they gained from the scheme and how it could be improved
- A report in the form of a White Paper from the OII to the Ford Foundation at the end of the project. This will seek to draw lessons from the experiences of the two visitors and those of the OII in hosting them, with a view to own utilisation in any continuation of the programme, as well as presentation to other universities who might wish to consider embarking upon similar future initiatives for collaboration between academia and civil society practitioners.

### **Benefits to the successful applicants**

1. Subsistence grant of £3,800 (7,500 USD) to cover research expenses and living costs in Oxford for the six week residency period.
2. Travel grant of up to £1,000 (2,000 USD) for travel to and from the UK.
3. Academic Visitor status within the university with University Card.
4. Inclusion in staff mailing lists inviting to department talks, seminars and non-course lectures, plus a wide range of University seminars and lectures.
5. Provision of an @oii.ox.ac.uk email address, if required. Access to the University and department's IT network, and use of PCs in the library. Access to defined areas of the OII's server.
6. Use of a hot desk for PC or Mac including normal use of telephone.
7. General access to the department's communal facilities and common room areas.
8. Limited free photocopying (with an additional charge for larger requirements)

### **Entitlements**

These include:

1. the right to be described as a Visitor of the OII and listed among the Visitors on the OII web site with a brief biography;
2. access to the OII's premises at 1 St Giles during the period of the visit;
3. use of the OII's library facilities and access to the University's Bodleian and other Libraries via the University Card.

## Responsibilities

1. To play an active role in the intellectual community of the OII during the period of the visit.
2. To give a seminar and to participate in the OII's programme of seminars and events.
3. To write a report reflecting on your experience of the visit with recommendations for improvements to the programme.
4. To ensure that any research or policy work undertaken during the visit will be undertaken in the public interest and that any reports or publications arising from it will be freely available to scholars and other interested parties.
5. To engage in general discussion about OII research, teaching initiatives, events or policy publications, as appropriate.
6. To contribute to the deliberations of the OII's Academic Committee.
7. To provide biographical details for the OII's web site and reports on relevant activities for the *OII Profile* and newsletters.
8. To acknowledge the OII, as appropriate, in research or other publications deriving from the visit.
9. To abide by all relevant university and OII policies.

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