



Call for Applications: Access to Energy Journalism Fellowship

November 10, 2015

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Access to Energy
Journalism Fellowship

Application deadline:
November 29, 2015

A global collaborative journalism project

Over a billion people in the world lack access to modern energy services such as electricity to power their communities' x-ray machines or clean-burning cookstoves to prepare their families' meals. An estimated two times that number lack reliable access. While looking differently throughout the world, energy poverty has significant impacts on health, access to basic services and economic opportunity everywhere.

What systemic issues are driving energy poverty? How are people on the ground impacted? And, perhaps most importantly, what potential solutions exist that also take climate change and other social and environmental issues into account?

These are the questions the Access to Energy Journalism Fellowship (AEJF) seeks to probe. By supporting journalists around the world to report on energy access in their regions, the AEJF aims to shed light on related problems and investigate potential solutions.

The fellowship

The goals of the AEJF are twofold. First, it seeks to support journalism on energy access that will have an impact on public discourse locally, in the country/region of the reporter. Second, it aims to bring stories on energy access from many different parts of the world together, on one platform, to paint a broader picture of the landscape of energy access issues globally. Because energy poverty looks so different from one place to the next, this collaborative approach will add much-needed depth and nuance to the broader conversation. The project will be presented at the the 2016 OpenAccess Energy Summit in Waterloo, Ontario, hosted by the Waterloo Global Science Initiative.

How it works

Discourse Media will award fellowships to up to eight journalists from around the world to produce one long-form written feature article on the issue of energy access in their country/region. The resulting content will be published in three potential places:

- Individual features will be published by each fellow's media outlet.
- Content from all fellows will be published on a dedicated project website that will act as a marquee hub for energy access journalism.
- All features produced as part of the project will be available to the other media outlets taking part in the fellowship to publish, if they wish, through a content sharing agreement.



Eligibility

The fellowships are open to both staff reporters and to freelancers who have a written agreement from an editor at a publication to publish the content they produce and take part in the project.

Fellows will be selected based on: 1) the demonstrated quality of their past work; and 2) the story they wish to pursue, which should explore an underreported side of the energy access story in their country from a systemic perspective. We want stories that are deeply rooted in people's lived experience. We want to shed light on how different countries around the world are grappling with the issue of energy poverty and what that might mean for the future of your country/region in a time of climate change and other major challenges.

Application Procedures

As part of the application, reporters are required to submit:

- A proposal (maximum 750 words) detailing: their motivation and rationale for wanting to partake in the project; the story idea/angle they will pursue with their reporting, and how they will do so; and any additional multimedia that would accompany the piece. Additional multimedia is encouraged, but not required.
- A letter of support, from an editor at the applicant's publication, committing to publish their feature and participate in the project.
- A proposed budget. In general, this funding pool is intended to support reporting expenses above and beyond resources and compensation provided by the applicant's publication. Funding is flexible, and can cover a range of reporting expenses from travel to supplies; requests for personal stipends will be considered in some cases, particularly in countries where compensation for journalism is poor. The total pool of available funding for all fellows combined is \$14,000 CAD. Please provide a budget that details all expenses that your proposed funding request would cover.
- A brief bio and CV.
- Two or three examples of their written work. Up to two multimedia examples may be included in addition to written work.

Applications should be emailed to AEJF@discoursemedia.org. Application deadline is midnight, Pacific Standard Time, November 29, 2015. Fellows will be selected and contacted by the end of December, 2015.

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Expected Deliverables/Requirements

Fellows will be expected to produce:

- One written feature of about 2,500-3000 words. Note: While the fellowship will be open to reporters from all mediums, a print-quality written feature is required. The fellows will produce two versions of their article: one written to suit the audience of the their local publication (written to a local audience, in a local language, if relevant), and one tweaked to speak to an international audience for the project platform and other participating publications (in English). If the local version of the reporter's article will be written/published in a language other than English, translation services should be included in the budget.

- A blog post giving an insider glimpse into their reporting for the project.

Articles must be completed and submitted for publication by mid March, 2016

About the project

The AEJF is administered and produced by [Discourse Media](#), with financial support from the [Waterloo Global Science Initiative](#) (WGSi).

WGSi's current initiatives are centred around the question: "How can we use the latest science and technology to decrease our reliance on non-renewable energy sources and improve the well-being of the energy isolated?"

To respond to a gap in media discourse around the issue of energy access globally, Discourse Media created a journalism project concurrent with the leadup to WGSi's [Open-Access Energy Summit](#).

Current journalistic reporting on global energy issues is fragmented into silos. Most coverage only looks at the issue through the lens of one beat, whether that be business or environment or development. The challenge, when it comes to reporting that tackles the issue of energy access, is that these facets are rarely connected. Discourse Media created the AEJF to support journalism that pushes the conversation about energy poverty and climate change into new bounds.

WGSi's support of the project does not imply endorsement of or influence over the content produced. Discourse Media adheres to the highest standard of journalistic ethics, as outlined in the Canadian Association of Journalists [guidelines](#).

Additional opportunities

Journalist fellows will have the opportunity to apply for funding to attend WGSi's OpenAccess Energy Summit taking place in Waterloo, Canada in April, 2016 if they so choose. They will also have the opportunity to take part in a two-way knowledge sharing

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exercise with energy experts from around the world. Neither participation in the summit nor the knowledge sharing exercise is required however, further funding and reporting opportunities may stem from both.

About Discourse Media

Discourse Media is an independent production company that produces and enables in-depth journalism projects about complex challenges facing society. Our mission is to stimulate constructive public dialogue with forward-looking journalism driven by inclusive community engagement. We aim to contribute to a world in which everyone has the empathy, access to sophisticated information, and imagination to engage in dialogue about complex challenges and take action.

Some of our previous work: [Moving Forward](#), an eight-part series of investigative data reports about Metro Vancouver's regional transportation system, was produced by Discourse Media to help citizens make an informed decision during a transportation referendum. It was [shortlisted](#) for the 2015 Data Journalism Website of the Year by the Global Editors Network. Discourse Media is currently working on the [Bob Carty Free Expression Fellowship](#) to break down barriers between reporters and Aboriginal communities. [Possible Canadas](#), another current Discourse Media project, is a collaboration with student journalists from across western Canada with the goal of sparking a conversation that puts young people's perspectives on the political agenda.

See more of Discourse Media's work at www.discoursemedia.org.

About WGSi

The Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSi) is a [non-profit partnership](#) between the [Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics](#) and the [University of Waterloo](#). WGSi works to promote dialogue around complex global issues and to catalyze the long-range thinking necessary to advance ideas, opportunities and strategies for a secure and sustainable future through series of conferences, expert panels, workshops, and publications.

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