

Call for Applications

The Lab at the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard University is making a call for applications from *investigative journalists* to write monographs about “institutional corruption” within selected institutions.

Background

Launched in 2009, the Lab is a five-year research project to study the phenomenon of “institutional corruption.” “Institutional corruption” refers not to bribery, or other familiar violations of law or ethics. It refers instead to influences within an economy of influence that tend to (1) weaken the effectiveness of an institution, especially by (2) weakening public trust of the institution.

A paradigm case for this form of corruption might be Congress. Candidates for Congress fund their elections through private campaign contributions. Those contributions are perfectly legal, indeed, constitutionally protected. But plausibly, the system of privately funded public elections might (1) weaken the effectiveness of Congress, especially by (2) weakening public trust of Congress due to the influence funders may have over members. If either condition obtains because of private funding, Congress would then qualify as an example of “institutional corruption.”

The institutions within which the Lab is exploring these phenomena include any significant public institution that depends for its success in part at least upon a substantial level of public trust. Such institutions can be either public or private, and if private, then either for-profit or not-for-profit. They include among others the academy, public health institutions, the financial services industry, the elected state judiciary, media (public and private), and Congress.

Requirements

In order to better synthesize ongoing research and stimulate public discussion and ultimately reform, the Lab is inviting applications from experienced investigative journalists to produce monographs about targeted institutions. Each monograph would function as an extended institutional ethnography, describing both real and perceived threats to the independence of an institution, and exploring possible solutions to those threats that could be feasibly implemented. The research and data necessary to apply that common framework to a particular institution would be the responsibility of the journalist.

Fellowships would be for one or two years, depending upon the subject.

Successful candidates would be in residence in Cambridge during the academic year. They must participate in a weekly workshop with an interdisciplinary group of research and practice fellows. The goal of the workshop is both to ex-

plore theoretical issues raised by “institutional corruption,” and to develop practical solutions.

Candidates would keep the copyright to any work produced, but grant the Center a nonexclusive license to publish the final report.

The ideal candidate has a minimum of 5 years of investigative reporting experience, though those with less experience will be considered.

Salary is commensurate with experience. Health benefits will be provided.

How to Apply

To apply, please submit to the Research Director of the Center:

- A proposal that describes the institution you would cover, and any relevant experience you have with that institution;
- A Curriculum vitae;
- At least two letters of reference.

The **deadline for all applications is** February 15, 2011.

Applications or letters of recommendation received after the deadline will not be considered.

Send complete applications to the Research Director by mail at the address below, or by email to:

applications@ethics.harvard.edu.

The Research Director
Harvard University
Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics
124 Mount Auburn Street, Suite 520N
Cambridge, MA 02138

Please feel free to [email](mailto:applications@ethics.harvard.edu) us (applications@ethics.harvard.edu) with any questions.