**POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Program Officer**

*Global Internet Rights*

*Democracy, Rights and Justice*

**SUMMARY DESCRIPTION:**

The Ford Foundation seeks to hire a dynamic, creative and innovative leader to serve as Program Officer focusing on internet rights from a global perspective in the newly created Internet Rights team. Building on Ford’s rich legacy in and commitment to promoting universal access, open systems and clear protections for the public in the Internet environment, the Program Officer will manage a portfolio of grants and other activities to support a robust field of organizations doing work primarily in the Global South as part of the Foundation’s Democracy, Rights and Justice Program. Joining a dynamic program staff working on a range of issues around the world, the Program Officer will also have the opportunity to work with program staff on other teams whose work relates to the portfolio’s central mission.

**BACKGROUND:**

The unique feature of the Internet compared to other communication technologies, is that it is interactive. At its best, it enables peer-to-peer creation, the sharing of content and viral organization. It enables people to bypass censorship in repressive societies, seek and share information on a large scale, and enables people and groups to communicate globally at virtually no cost. Activists can communicate and campaign more inexpensively than ever before and new fronts for voice, learning, culture and social change can be developed.

At its worst, the Internet can diminish human rights and increase inequity and injustice. Access is not ubiquitous, and there are few protections in place to ensure that all can benefit from these new systems. Also, the increased, persistent capturing and availability of user data threatens to create a ubiquitous environment of pervasive surveillance. This trend is already revealing significant challenges with regards to financial equity, speech, privacy and due process.

These significant challenges are compounded by the fact that there is no global overarching treaty, body, or regime to oversee the Internet worldwide, and that most of the Internet’s infrastructure is built, maintained and controlled by the private sector with critical operational decisions often made solely by companies without public or government oversight. To compound the issue, most international civil society organizations, that could balance the power of corporations and hold governments to account, have yet to truly incorporate technology and Internet issues into their strategic programs.

It is important to question how Internet systems and technologies are governed, architected and distributed in order to ensure that all people have the opportunity to tell their stories, acquire knowledge and actively participate in society. Without policies in place to promote access, millions of people will remain underrepresented and excluded from important opportunities to connect, contribute and achieve. Without clear, enforceable rules to protect the public, there is no question that these technical systems will be used to undermine the existing fabric of opportunities and rights that this foundation has worked so hard to achieve.

The Ford Foundation’s programs in Internet Rights strive to promote economic and social protections in the Internet environment, create ubiquitous, inexpensive and safe Internet access, broaden the participation of marginalized groups through targeted strategies for digital inclusion, create a competitive marketplace for innovation and access, promote open and transparent technology systems, and advance fair and representative strategies for Internet governance.

**CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS:**

* Proven record of leadership, planning, and management success
* Substantial previous experience in and deep knowledge of Internet policy
* Proven ability to think analytically, critically with agility to translate ideas and insights into action through coherent and viable program work
* Action-orientated and entrepreneurial self-starter who can work successfully independently and in teams
* Strong facilitation skills – the ability to listen and learn from diverse perspectives
* Demonstrated organizational skills, and the ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously
* Strong time management proficiency
* Personal qualities of humility, capacity for self-reflection, and a sense of humor
* Commitment to the Foundation’s mission and core values of equity, fairness and diversity

**REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

* Bachelor’s degree with minimum 7 years’ professional experience working with media, technology and policy organizations
* Substantive professional experience working with media, technology and policy organizations internationally or within a global context
* Sophisticated knowledge about existing and emerging technologies, and their regulatory environments
* Familiarity with strategic communications and the use of new technologies to promote social justice
* Experience working with a range of individuals in civil society, government and the private sector
* Demonstrated experience working effectively as part of a team and with colleagues of diverse backgrounds and perspectives
* Excellent analytical, oral presentation, writing, and interpersonal skills; fluency in English
* Willingness to work in New York City

**PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

* Demonstrated commitment to and experience working with social justice movements
* Experience living and working in the global south and familiarity with technology and philanthropy

**Location:** New York, NY

**Application deadline:** Until filled; target start date is June-September 2014

**Salary:** is based on experience and on the Foundation’s commitment to internal equity. A generous benefits package is provided.

**To apply for the position**: <http://www.fordfoundation.org/careers>

*Equal employment opportunity and having a diverse staff are fundamental principles at The Ford Foundation, where employment and promotional opportunities are based upon individual capabilities and qualifications without regard to race, color, religion, gender, pregnancy, sexual* *orientation preference, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, veteran status or any other protected characteristic as established under law.*

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