

The Atkinson

Fellowship in Public Policy

for Canadian journalists

Sponsored by: The Atkinson Charitable Foundation • Toronto Star
The Honderich Family

Description

The Atkinson Fellowship in Public Policy is designed to further both the tradition of **liberal journalism** in Canada and the commitment to **social and economic justice** of Joseph E. Atkinson, former publisher of the Toronto Star.

The Fellowship provides a grant for a Canadian journalist to undertake a year-long research project on a topical public policy issue.

Since its establishment in 1988, the Atkinson Fellowship has aided research into some of Canada's most important and often most complicated policy debates. Fellows have investigated the causes, the effects, the debates and the **solutions that most enhance equality, opportunity, justice and an understanding of who we are as Canadians.**

While the Fellowship is interested in any number of topics, and is open to new and imaginative ideas for research, it favours issues that are in the forefront of public debate and have implications for Canadian society at large (e.g., poverty, unemployment, trade agreements, welfare, child care, etc.). The Fellowship will not consider projects in history, anthropology, literature, folklore and related areas.

Terms

The annual competition for the Atkinson Fellowship is open to all full-time Canadian journalists in print or broadcast media. Preference is given to those applicants who have already achieved some distinction in reporting on policy issues.

The Fellowship is held for a one-year period (from September 1 to August 31) and is not renewable. The stipend is \$75,000. A budget for research expenses up to \$25,000 will also be considered. The Fellow will be expected to exclude other journalistic activities during this period.

In their letter of intent, applicants should indicate considerable familiarity with the literature in their chosen area of focus. Applicants should also suggest concrete policy questions that they seek to examine and answer. Letters of intent and subsequent full applications as selected by the Committee, may be submitted in either English or French.

The final decision on the eligibility of an application rests with the Selection Committee.

The goal of the Fellowship is to produce a major report that can be published as a series of newspaper articles and later reprinted in booklet form. Therefore, the report should be written for the general public and not for a specialized audience. The project must be completed within the one-year period of the Fellowship and published shortly thereafter.

The series of articles will be made available without charge to all interested members of Canadian Press. The Fellow is also free to develop the report into a book or television or radio documentary.

The Atkinson Principles

The editorial principles Atkinson espoused were founded on his belief that a progressive newspaper should contribute to the advancement of society through pursuit of social, economic and political reforms. He was particularly concerned about injustice, be it social, economic, political, legal or racial. Fundamental to his philosophy was the belief that the state has the right and duty to act when private initiative fails. While Atkinson's beliefs were never codified in any set form, the central Principles can be summarized as follows:

1. A Strong, United and Independent Canada:

Atkinson argued for a strong central government and the development of distinctive social, economic and cultural policies appropriate to an independent country.

2. Social Justice:

Atkinson was relentless in pressing for social and economic programs to help those less advantaged and showed particular concern for the least advantaged among us.

3. Individual and Civil Liberties:

Atkinson always pressed for equal treatment of all citizens under the law, particularly minorities, and was dedicated to the fundamental freedoms of belief, thought, opinion and expression and the freedom of press.

4. Community and Civic Engagement:

Atkinson continually advocated the importance of proper city planning, the development of strong communities with their vibrant local fabrics and the active involvement of citizens in civic affairs.

5. The Rights of Working People:

The Star was born out of a strike in 1892 and Atkinson was committed to the rights of working people including freedom of association and the safety and dignity of the workplace.

6. The Necessary Role of Government: When Atkinson believed the public need was not met by the private sector and market forces alone, he argued strongly for government intervention.

Some Previous Fellows

- 2007 Judith Steed, Toronto, Ontario**
(work in progress) Growing Old: Hidden Poverty, Looming Crises, New Solutions.
- 2006 Ed Struzik, Edmonton, Alberta**
Hot Ice: Climate Change and the Arctic.
- 2005 Marie Wadden, St John's, Newfoundland**
Tragedy or Triumph: Canadian Public Policy and Aboriginal Addictions.
- 2004 Ann Silversides, Toronto, Ontario**
Canadian Biomedical Research - In Whose Interests?
- 2003 Andrew Duffy, Ottawa, Ontario**
Class Struggles: Public Education and the New Canadian.
- 2002 Ann Rees, Burnaby, B.C.**
Red File Alert: Public Access at Risk.
- 2001 Margaret Philp and Patti Gower, Toronto, Ontario**
When the Bough Breaks: Public Adoption.
- 2000 Linda Goyette, Edmonton, Alberta**
Here to Stay.
- 1999 Alison Griffiths and David Cruise, Milton, Ontario**
Hear No Evil: A Look Into the World of the Hard of Hearing and the Deaf.
- 1998 Frances Bula, Vancouver, BC**
No Place Like Home.
- 1997 Scott Simmie, Toronto, Ontario**
Out of Mind: An Investigation Into Mental Health.
- 1996 André Picard, Montréal, Québec**
A Call to Alms: The Voluntary Sector in the Age of Cutbacks.
- Lisa Priest, Toronto, Ontario**
Operating in the Dark: Accountability in our Health Care System.
- 1995 Lois Sweet, Ottawa, Ontario**
The Fourth "R": Religion in our Classrooms.

To Apply

Applicants are invited to submit a letter of intent of a maximum of three pages that summarizes their topic of interest, its importance, main policy questions, a brief outline of proposed articles, and a planned treatment/approach to the research. Please include your curriculum vitae.

Submit **4 copies** of your letter of intent and curriculum vitae by **Monday, January 14, 2008** to:

Elizabeth Chan
Co-ordinator, Atkinson Fellowship Committee
One Yonge Street, Suite 1508
Toronto, ON M5E 1E5
416 869 4034 Telephone 416 865 3619 Fax
echan@atkinsonfoundation.ca

The Fellowship Committee will select up to five finalists who will be invited to submit a full proposal for the 2008 Fellowship. Finalists will receive an honorarium for their work.

The Fellowship Committee will make its final decision by February 15, 2008.

Selection Committee

John Honderich, Committee Chair
Chair, Torstar Voting Trust

Peter A. Armstrong
President, The Atkinson Charitable Foundation

Janice Gross Stein
Director, Munk Centre for International Studies
University of Toronto

Charles Pascal
Executive Director, The Atkinson Charitable Foundation

Jagoda Pike
Publisher, Toronto Star

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