

November 17, 2011

Dear Friends,

We hope you enjoy this week's edition of the Newsflash!

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

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(Call for Applications) TED invites Applications for the Fellows Program to attend TEDGlobal 2012 Conference

TED is currently looking for innovators from different disciplines including technology, design, entertainment, engineering, economics, journalism, etc., to be part of an eclectic team of thinkers for TEDGlobal 2012 Conference. TED expects these innovators to have potential to bring positive changes in the world for the betterment of the lives of people. TED invites youths in the age group of 21-40, from regions of Africa, Asia/Pacific, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Middle East. However, anyone from around the world and over 18 years of age is welcome to apply to be a TED Fellow.

Fellowship Conditions

During the Fellowship:

- All Fellows must attend all pre-conference and conference events. Late arrival and early departure from the conference are grounds for dismissal.
- Any behaviour that could bring discredit to the TED Fellows program is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program at TED's sole discretion.
- Conference attendance is non-transferable. If a Fellow or Senior Fellow is unable to attend a conference, no one may attend in the Fellow's place.

- All pre-conference and conference related events are intended for Fellows and conference attendees only. TED cannot accommodate spouses, children or friends.
- Upon acceptance into the TED Senior Fellows Program, individuals will be asked to sign a contract outlining the conditions of the Fellowship. Various stipulations of the contract include: intent to fully participate in four pre-conferences and conferences (TED and TEDGlobal) over the subsequent two years. TED must be notified no later than 90 days prior to the conference if a Senior Fellow will be missing. Failure to attend one conference without notice will result in immediate removal from the program. Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis.
- TED pays for round-trip economy airfare, ground transportation to and from the conference location, and meals and shared accommodation on site. TED does not cover hotel incidental expenses.
- In addition to the above terms and conditions, all Fellows and Senior Fellows must comply with all terms and conditions of TED registration, as well as [TED.com](http://www.ted.com) terms of use.

Selection Process

- TED Fellows are selected by the program staff.
- Once a year, an international selection committee meets to select the TED Senior Fellows for the following year.
- The selection committee is comprised of people who represent the breadth of interest and achievement that makes up the TED community. Committee members bring experiences from various fields and come from countries representing the target regions. Selections are made by the group as a whole, not by individuals.

Last date for submitting the applications is December 06, 2011.

For more go to: <http://www.ted.com/pages/247>

(Call for Proposals) IBM Citizenship invites Grant Proposals under the Smarter Cities Challenge 2012

The Smarter Cities Challenge is an initiative of IBM Citizenship launched in 2010 to address the challenges that 100 competitively selected cities in the world face. IBM uses the skills and expertise of its teams of talented employees in this initiative to address the challenges that a specific city in the world faces. Last year IBM Citizenship sent its teams to seven different cities before launching the 2011 grant process.

In this context, IBM Citizenship is currently inviting grant proposals from cities around the world under the Smarter Cities Challenge 2012.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated for the strength of the proposal and potential for a Challenge grant to make a positive impact.

To measure the strength of a proposal, the review team will look for proposals that:

- Clearly outline a problem or opportunity to explore rather than a solution to be implemented
- Provide evidence that the proposal is connected to the top priorities and challenges of city and community leadership;
- Emphasize efforts to address cross-system or services challenges to align with the notion that cities are composed of 'systems of systems'.

To measure the potential impact of a project, the review team will look for applicants that:

- Champion a pressing, substantive topic that if addressed would tangibly affect the lives of their citizens.
- Demonstrate strong, dynamic leadership with track records of innovation and accomplishments
- Commit to collaboration and access, including willingness to provide access to key stakeholders and existing efforts to promote open data.

Application Procedure

The application consists of a fillable PDF form which can be uploaded to the Smarter Cities Challenge website upon completion. In addition to the form, each applicant is required to submit a brief letter from the Mayor, or equivalent executive officer of the municipal government affirming the validity of the submission.

Applications will be accepted in the following languages: English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified) and Japanese. Only general-purpose governing bodies may apply for the Smarter Cities Challenge – special districts (such as port authorities, school districts or utility districts) are not eligible for the program at this time. After uploading a proposal, applicants will receive an email confirming their submission.

Last date for submitting the proposal is December 16, 2011.

For more go to: <https://smartercitieschallenge.org/index.html>

(Call for Applications) IDEO.org Fellowship Program 2013: Design Solutions to address Poverty

[IDEO.org](http://ideo.org) is accepting applications for the [IDEO.org](http://ideo.org) Fellowship Program 2013 that provides an opportunity for leaders in the social sector (and other areas) to work on designing solutions to address poverty-related problems.

The Fellowship Program enables future global leaders from the design, business, and social sectors to spend one year working with experienced IDEO designers to address poverty-related challenges using the tools of human-centered design. Over a 12-month period, Fellows will deliver solutions for non-profits, social enterprises, and foundations on an array of topics, such as: agriculture, gender equity, financial services, health, water, and sanitation.

Sample projects include: Working with a non-profit to improve sanitation in Ghana, partnering with an Indian low-cost health care provider to design an effective nurse/patient experience, and collaborating with a U.S. health care non-profit to bring birth control options to low-income women.

Fellowships are based in California. Frequent travel in the field is required. The application process is highly competitive and open to applicants from around the world; preference is given to innovators with work experience in the developing world and/or with low-income communities. Candidates should have an openness to other cultures and lifestyles and will be expected to be self-reliant and thrive in a start-up environment.

Candidates applying for the fellowship should have at least 5 years of professional full-time work experience, or a graduate degree plus 3 years of work experience. Proficiency in English is a must.

Individuals from the design, business, and social sectors who can help [IDEO.org](http://ideo.org) teams deliver great work for its partner organizations are ideal candidates. You should be passionate about social innovation, have experience working in the developing world or with low-income communities, work well in teams, be clear and articulate in describing your ideas, and love flexing your creative muscles. Candidates from outside the US will be supported for their visa application process.

The deadline for submissions: 9 December 2011.

For more go to: <http://ideo.org/careers>

(Call for Nominations) Martin Ennals Foundation seeks Nominations for the Human Rights Defenders Award

Martin Ennals Foundation is inviting nominations for the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders, which is offered to recognize and honor people who are working to protect and promote the human rights. The award is offered by the

Martin Ennals Foundation in memory of Martin Ennals who dedicated his life for protecting the human rights. He served as the first Secretary-General of Amnesty International and came up with many ideas that were ahead of his time.

Award Goals

Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders (MEA) has been constituted at providing recognition and protective publicity to those who are currently involved in front line work for the promotion and protection of human rights. The award aims at encouraging individuals and – exceptionally – organisations who are currently working for the rights of others in conditions hostile to fundamental human rights and who are in need of protection. Special account is taken of those who have demonstrated an active record of combating human rights violations by courageous and innovative means.

Criteria

- The selection of the winning candidates is made by the Jury of the Martin Ennals Foundation. The announcement of the nominees is made around mid March and that of the laureates is made in early May. The proceedings of the Jury of the MEA are confidential and no correspondence about the selection procedure will be accepted.

- Anybody can nominate any individual or organisation by filling out the appropriate form. Neither individuals nor organisations may nominate themselves or act as referee for themselves. Three referees are needed for a valid nomination and these persons must have agreed to act as such.

- Definition of ‘Human Rights Defenders’: “For the purpose of selecting candidates for the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders, the Jury consider an eligible human rights defender (HRD) to be one who risks or suffers victimisation, harassment or disadvantage for exercising the rights expressed in the International Bill of Rights, and who, in conformity with these instruments, promotes and protects the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others, individually or in groups.”

- No posthumous award is given (except when a candidate has already passed the first round).

- The candidate should not use or advocate violence.

- The nominations form asks for basic personal information on the candidate. Additional information can be sent as a separate document.

- The MEF and the NGOs on the Jury may request further information and documentation concerning candidates

Last date for submitting the nominations is December 9, 2011.

For more go

to: http://www.martinennalsaward.org/MEA/index.php?option=com_rsform&view=rsform&Itemid=65&lang=en

(Article) Special report: Millions face starvation across Africa as land rush intensifies

A report released recently by Oxfam says that poor people, particularly in Africa, are hardest hit by a new wave of land deals. The competition is intensifying, driving millions of people into the abyss of poverty. This should serve as a warning to countries like Tanzania. The phenomenon of land grabbing currently affecting most countries in Africa has led to food insecurity and human rights violations.

In many African countries, local residents regularly lose out their land to the elites-- domestic or foreign investors--because they lack the power to claim their rights effectively or to defend and advance their interests. This has been the bad side of large-scale land acquisition which is now gaining ground in countries like Tanzania, asserts Oxfam. The situation calls for urgent steps to restore the people's land rights as a way of addressing deepening poverty. Titled 'Land and Power, The growing scandal surrounding the new wave of investments in land', the report says most of the land acquisitions in Tanzania, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique and Senegal have been used to grow crops for export commodities such as flowers and biofuels. In Mozambique, where approximately 35 per cent of households are chronically food insecure, only 32,000 hectares out of the 433,000 approved for land deals between 2007 and 2009 were for food crops. The recent record of investment in land presents a saddening story of rapidly increasing pressure on land---a natural resource upon which the food security of millions of people living in poverty depends. Oxfam says too many investments have resulted in dispossession, deception, violation of human rights, and destruction of livelihoods. Without national and international measures to defend the rights of people living in poverty, this modern-day land-rush looks set to leave too many poor families worse off, often evicted from their land with little or no recourse to justice.

According to the report, in developing countries, as many as 227 million hectares of land--an area the size of Western Europe--has been sold or leased since 2001, mostly to international investors. The bulk of these land acquisitions has taken place over the past two years, according to on-going research by the Land Matrix Partnership. The recent rise in land acquisitions can be explained by the 2007--08 food prices crisis, which led investors and governments to turn their attention towards agriculture after decades of neglect. But this interest in land is not something that will pass; it is a trend with strong drivers. The land deals are very often intended to produce for foreign food and biofuel markets.

They can often rightly be called 'land grabs'. The term land grab refers to land acquisitions which do one or more of the following: violate human rights, and particularly the equal rights of women; flout the principle of free, prior, and informed consent of the affected land users, particularly indigenous peoples; ignore the impacts on social, economic, and gender relations, and on the

environment; avoid transparent contracts with clear and binding commitments on employment and benefit sharing; eschew democratic planning, independent oversight, and meaningful participation.

For more go to: <http://thecitizen.co.tz/sunday-citizen/-/15298-special-reportmillions-face-starvation-across-africa-as-land-rush-intensifies>

(Article) ‘Fertilizer’ trees help African farmers increase yields

Extension programs aimed at helping African farmers grow crops more efficiently are showing some good results. Many subsistence farmers are using fertilizer trees to help enrich depleted soils. In many cases, the trees, which fix nitrogen in the soil, have doubled yields of maize.

It’s a hopeful sign for a continent battered by weather extremes, famine and record food prices.

“In only five African countries, there are now some 400,000 smallholder farmers using fertilizer trees to provide critically needed soil nutrients. Many report major increases in maize yields, which shows that it is possible to rapidly introduce innovations in Africa that can have an immediate impact on food security,” said Oluyede Ajayi, a senior scientist at the World Agroforestry Centre.

The centre’s study focused on the rapid adoption of fertilizer trees by farmers targeted in research, training and extension programs in Malawi, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In eastern Zambia alone, the study reports the use of fertilizer trees grew from a pilot project in the early 1990s that involved only 12 farmers to adoption by 66,000 farmers as of 2006. In Malawi, there are now 145,000 farmers using fertilizer trees.

Across the region, researchers have documented a doubling of maize yields on farms employing fertilizer trees compared to those that did not, which has dramatically increased both incomes and food security. In Zambia, for example, incomes for farmers using the fertilizer trees averaged from \$233 to \$327 per hectare, compared to only \$130 for unfertilized fields. And the increased yields provided between 57 to 114 extra days of food.

“We also found that when farmers plant these trees, water efficiency improves,” Ajayi said. “Farmers are getting higher yields from the same amount of rainwater. And the trees are helping reduce the run-off and soil erosion that is a key factor behind food production shortfalls in Africa.”

Fertilizer trees enhance soil health by drawing nitrogen from the air and transferring it to the soil through their roots and leaf litter, replenishing exhausted soils with rich sources of organic nutrients.

For more go to: <http://summitcountyvoice.com/2011/10/18/fertilizer-trees-help-african-farmers-increase-yields/>

(Resource) Survival: The movement for tribal peoples

For centuries, tribal peoples have had their lands stolen and suffered violence and oppression. But things are changing... join us in celebrating some of the reasons for optimism.

The time when entire peoples could be wiped out without anyone noticing is drawing to a close. The abuses of tribal peoples' rights now make worldwide headlines. In the case of the Yanomami of Brazil, an international campaign helped to secure their lands - and resulted in one of the biggest protected areas of rainforest in the world. Courts are more willing to stand up to governments. The Kalahari Bushmen are returning to their lands after a landmark court case funded by Survival supporters. The movement for tribal peoples rights is broader than ever before. The Dongria Kondh tribe's sacred mountain was saved from a British mining company after a worldwide outcry; their story was compared to the fictional Na'vi in the Hollywood blockbuster Avatar.

The original scientists

The lazy racism which describes tribal people as 'primitive' and 'backwards' is now being challenged wherever it occurs. Like all human societies, theirs are constantly changing and developing. Accusations of savagery are as wide of the mark as doomed attempts to 'preserve' living cultures. In fact, tribal people are the original scientists. They developed many of the planet's staple foods - crops which feed billions of people today. And without their botanical knowledge, many vital medicines might never have been developed.

Vibrant

Tribal people are not mere shadows of Western civilization, failed attempts to emulate us. Their ideas and visions are a different way of approaching the challenges that face humanity in the 21st century. Where their fundamental human rights are respected, tribal societies are strong, rich and vibrant. How the majority chooses to treat those who are most different to themselves, those who have chosen a different path to their own, is one of the pressing issues of our time.

Uncontacted tribes

In 2011, more than a hundred tribes around the world choose to reject contact

with outsiders. Many of them will be aware of the violence and disease which ravage isolated communities following contact. All have the opportunity to encounter the outside world but choose not to. Until recent times, uncontacted peoples who succumbed to outsiders' diseases and violence simply disappeared. Today most of their lands are protected -- at least on paper -- and invasions of their lands are seen as a major human rights violation. Survival continues to put pressure on governments and corporations to respect the rights of uncontacted and isolated peoples throughout the world.

Their disappearance is not inevitable

For 500 years, some have said that it is only a matter of time before tribal peoples disappear. Sometimes that sentiment is accompanied by a sigh of regret. Sometimes it is in the rhetoric of politicians planning to steal natural resources from tribal lands. But while the world's tribes have suffered greatly over the centuries, their disappearance is no foregone conclusion. More tribal peoples than ever before have rights over their lands recognized. From the headwaters of the Amazon to the Australian outback, tribal communities are living on the lands of their ancestors - and thriving.

Stopping the destruction benefits all humanity

The abuse of tribal peoples should concern everyone who believes in justice over the might of the majority. Of all the different ways of being human in the world today, most are tribal. The same goes for all the planet's languages. Tribal peoples offer everyone unique visions of what it means to be human, and of humanity's place in the world. Without them, we are all poorer. And tribal people are the best guardians of the natural world. Where they have been allowed to continue living on their lands, forest cover and biodiversity can be much higher than in other kinds of protected areas. Many tribal people know something that many of us have forgotten: that we are not separate from nature.

We have the tools

In a world full of complex problems, the solution to this one is simple. Tribal people are not threatened by progress, but by other people's notions of what progress must be. They know what is best for themselves, and the threats to their survival -- land theft, forced assimilation, violence -- are crimes. International law is finally catching up and providing tribal people and their supporters with the tools to fight back. But the long-term solution is simpler still: focusing global attention on the threats - and celebrating the successes. A rising groundswell of public opinion the world over will put paid to the abuses forever.

For more go

to: http://www.survivalinternational.org/goodnews?utm_source=Survival+International&utm_campaign=2d65de022a-Newsflash+November+2011&utm_medium=email

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website: <http://www.firelightfoundation.org/newsflash.php>.

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org.