Call for Applications

Big Tech & Society Media Fellowships 2022

Deadline: 31 May 2022 by 11.59 PM CET

IT for Change is a research and advocacy organization based in Bengaluru, India, that aims for a society in which digital technologies contribute to human rights, social justice, and equity. We are an organization at the forefront of southern-led and -centered digital and data policy. In a bid to further our commitment to democratizing discourse and perspective-building on digital justice, IT for Change is inviting applications for the debut cohort of its Big Tech & Society Media Fellowship program.

What do we offer?

The Big Tech & Society Media Fellowship offers journalists and media professionals the opportunity to pursue deeply researched, investigative long-form projects in print and audio on issues at the intersection of technology, policy, and economy. Specifically, we are looking to support work that is focused on the Global South, which surfaces strong regional and local narratives of technology, capitalism, policy, and development from Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America, and integrates economic and gender justice concerns. Major themes and an indicative (but not exhaustive) set of issues that the fellowships cover include, but are not restricted to:

Corporate power and digitalization

- FAANG and beyond: regional tech ecosystems of the Global South

- Sectoral deep-dives (e.g., finance, food, retail, pharma, etc.) of digitalization

- Big Tech, development, and infrastructure (e.g., education, health, and financial inclusion)

- Discursive overtures of Big Tech

Corporate excesses, data extractivism, and human rights

- Worker conditions in the digital economy

- Data concentration and extractivism

- Digital monopolies, corporate excess, and impact on market fairness

- Corporate capture of digital and data governance

- Climate justice and technology

Regulation of corporate power

- Emerging regulatory efforts from the Global South

- Big Tech and the multilateral arena, e-commerce, and digital trade

- Global digital economy governance for data and AI

- Frontier areas for policy (e.g., fintech, crypto, tele-medicine, cybersecurity, etc.)

Alternatives to Big Tech

- Digital public goods and social infrastructure initiatives

- Cooperatives and alternative economic models

- Collectively oriented data-based initiatives

Southern feminist perspectives on digital capitalism

- Feminist future of work in the platform economy

- Gender in e-commerce and digital trade debates

- Social and solidarity economy-based data business models for women's livelihoods

- Gendering digital economy and data governance debates

- Feminist visions of digital and data infrastructures

Funding ranging from USD 1,000 to USD 3,500 will be made available to selected applicants to work on and, develop media pieces that draw on substantive on-ground reporting and primary research. Two fellowship tracks are available for interested candidates to apply.

Track 1: Essays and analytical think pieces

Timeline: 3 Months (June-August 2022)

Stipend: USD 1,000

What's expected? Fellows will work on one essay, based on primary research and preferably some original reporting as per mutually agreed upon deadlines to be published in Bot Populi, IT for Change's alternative media platform.

Who can apply? We seek early to mid-career media professionals, scholars, researchers, and practitioners with a proven publication record of covering and analyzing Big Tech, to surface new and under-covered perspectives on digital economy debates. The ideal fellow is a compelling and creative storyteller, who is well-informed and has a keen interest on issues of digital economy, data, technology, and policy. They have sufficient immersion in policy analysis and are attuned to the specific regional contexts they seek to work in.

Applicants can be based out of anywhere but must be able to legally receive funds and authorized to work in their location.

Track 2: Investigative long-form reporting

Stipend: USD 3,500

Timeline: 6 Months (June-December 2022)

What's expected? Fellows will work on and produce three long-form pieces (either essays/articles or podcasts) based on original reporting and investigative research over the course of the fellowship as per mutually agreed upon deadlines. Outputs produced under the fellowship will be carried in Bot Populi, IT for Change's alternative media platform. Fellows are strongly encouraged to seek out and line up concurrent publication opportunities with media outlets and channels.

In addition to this, fellows will actively participate in two cohort learning sessions during the course of the fellowship and undertake at least one speaking engagement in affiliate events organized by IT for Change.

Fellows will also be expected to produce one short reflection piece on the reporting experience at the end of the fellowship.

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interest on issues of digital economy, data, technology, and policy. They have sufficient immersion in policy analysis and are attuned to the specific regional contexts they seek to work in. They are well-embedded in networks, have access to multiple leads and sources, and will travel the necessary extra mile to incorporate diverse and unique voices and stories into their work. Importantly, they are experienced in executing story production independently and in a timely manner.

We welcome both full-time as well as freelance media professionals to apply. Applicants who are in full-time positions must be able to carve out the necessary time and space to keep up with the commitments of the fellowship.

Applicants can be based out of anywhere but must be able to legally receive funds and authorized to work in their location.

Presently, we are only able to support work in English. However, we remain committed to reaching non-English audiences and amplifying the reach of the stories that will be produced from the cohort. Towards this, we will explore translation support where feasible.

How to apply?

Interested candidates may write to newsletter.datasyn@itforchange.net with the following materials and subject line: Application for Big Tech & Society Media Fellowships- Track (1/2).

- Current resume

- A one-page cover letter outlining your motivation, qualifications, and experience

- A proposal for work, detailing at least three pitches of the stories you plan to cover (about 200 words each) and whom you plan to contact for interviews

- Two work samples (solo authorship only) focusing on digital issues from the past three years in English

Timeline of decision-making and important dates

31 May 2022	Final date for submission of applications
5-10 June 2022	Communication to shortlisted candidates and interviews
10-15 June 2022	Final selections
15-20 June 2022	Orientation calls