



TRIENNIAL REPORT OF THE CONVENER OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE AWARD OF INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS

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The decision of the Board to continue the Fellowships Programme is welcome. It acknowledges the link with universities of the world, by which we define ourselves: graduation from a university is the prerequisite for membership of IFUW (Art. III of the Constitution).

REPORT ON THE 2005-2006 COMPETITION

Changes to Assessment Process

The process of assessment differed by intention in three respects from previous competitions. The Board accepted the recommendation of the Convener that it was not necessary that the Committee meet in Geneva and that assessment of applications should be carried out by email. Secondly, there had been a three-year interval since the last competition. Thirdly, there was a single Instruction Sheet and Application Form for Fellowships and Grants.

Applications Received through NFAs

Twenty-one NFAs put forward candidates; four of these put forward two candidates; two of these put forward three candidates. Five candidates put forward by NFAs, of which they were members, were citizens of a different country.

Pre-screening of applications from International Members

This occurred in January 2005. We are grateful to Daphne Elliott, honorary research fellow of Flinders University, South Australia, and to Sheba Skirball, immediate past convener of IFUW Fellowships Committee, for pioneering email assessment of these candidates and testing the usefulness of the new assessment guidelines. Five of these applications were put forward for consideration with the finalists proposed by NFAs.

Final Assessment

The Committee exchanged rankings and opinions of all selected applications by email during February and March 2005. There were benefits in the longer period for deliberation and in the opportunity to obtain by email information in answer to committee members' doubts. This was achieved at arm's length from the committee. I am in no doubt that the expense of airfares is not justified and that assessment by email is efficient and fair.

Awards

The quantum of money available was greater and the applications were fewer than usual. Four points: for the first time funds from the bequest of Professor Ruth Bowden were available and a Fellowship was named in her honour; the British Federation of Women Graduates offered the second special Fellowship from the bequest of one of their members, Dr Marjory Shaw (BFWG has generously committed itself to offering a third Fellowship in her honour for 2008-2009); the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) is to be congratulated on increasing the value of the A. Vibert Douglas Fellowship to Can\$12,000; fourthly, the Committee did not consider that any application fulfilled the criterion of relevance to the IFUW programme and made no recommendation for an IFUW

Programme for Action Fellowship. IFUW's action and advocacy programmes are not well matched with the timing and focus of doctoral research. It is recommended that this idea be not pursued.

A list of the twenty successful applicants is available at: <http://www.ifuw.org/fellowships/fellows0506.htm>

Funding

In addition to capitalised fellowships offered by BFWG Charitable Foundation and CFUW total funds available amounted to 71,000 Swiss francs. We are grateful to the national affiliates that support our on-going awards. In addition we would like to thank the other national affiliates which provided funding for this competition: the Australian Federation, the Irish Federation, the Hong Kong Association, as well the individual members who continue to support this programme. Special thanks and recognition must go to the members and branches of the New Zealand Federation who contributed a significant proportion, almost 21,000 Swiss francs, of the funds distributed in the 2005-2006 competition.

2007-2010 TRIENNIUM

There will be one competition during the coming triennium. Applications are now open and close in Geneva on 1 November 2007.

Several changes have been made to the application process to achieve efficiency, integrity and equity. Applications must be submitted electronically. Referees will report electronically direct to IFUW, no longer in sealed envelopes through the hands of applicants. Applicants for Fellowships must have completed their first academic year and must include among their referees their current supervisor.

Ambiguities arising from phrases in the selection criteria, such as 'not normally' and 'preference will be given to', have been removed. For example, applicants will definitely not be considered unless their programme is in a country other than that in which they were educated or habitually reside.

A suite of electronic documents has been developed for use by members of the committee and referees. NFAs should note that applicants must use only the current application form which is on the IFUW website.

As a result of the generosity of the many Australian Universities which supported the 2004 IFUW Conference, especially the Australian Evening, the Australian Federation's LAC was able to conserve sufficient funds to offer in 2008-2009 an Australian Universities Grant of 5000 Swiss francs, named in recognition of these donors. In addition, thanks to our members who participated in the Fellowships Raffle at the Perth Conference, we raised an additional of 5,475 Swiss francs for the programme.

Please consider giving, as an individual or an NFA, to support the next competition, which cannot be successful without your help. See: <http://www.ifuw.org/fellowships/support.htm>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My thanks are due to Committee Members and our Board Member and I am confident that the Committee's appreciation of the support and leadership of the IFUW staff is hearty and unanimous.

Dorothy W Collin, Convener
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