

*The Christensen Fund: backing the stewards of cultural and biological diversity*

**JOB ANNOUNCEMENT:**  
**PROGRAM OFFICER FOR THE GLOBAL BIO-CULTURAL INITIATIVE**

**December 2005**

**The New Position**

The Program Officer for the Global Bio-Cultural Initiative is an exciting new position charged with developing a grantmaking strategy for transforming understanding of the importance of - and links between - cultural and biological diversity, and strengthening collaboration between local groups and their global allies struggling with these issues.

**The Christensen Fund (TCF)**

The Christensen Fund ([www.christensenfund.org](http://www.christensenfund.org)), founded in 1957 and located in Palo Alto in the San Francisco Bay Area, is an independent private foundation that has long supported international work in the arts and conservation science fields and now works with the following mission:

The Christensen Fund believes in the power of biological and cultural diversity to sustain and enrich a world faced with great change and uncertainty. We focus on the "bio-cultural" - the rich but neglected adaptive interweave of people and place, culture and ecology. The Fund's mission is to buttress the efforts of people and institutions who believe in a biodiverse world infused with artistic expression and work to secure ways of life and landscapes that are beautiful, bountiful and resilient.

We pursue this mission through place-based work in regions chosen for their potential to withstand and recover from the global erosion of diversity. We focus on backing the efforts of locally-recognized community custodians of this heritage, and their alliances with scholars, artists, advocates and others. We also fund international efforts to build global understanding of these issues. These are challenging goals, so we seek out imaginative, thoughtful and occasionally odd partners to learn with. The Fund works primarily through grant making, as well as through capacity and network building, knowledge generation, collaboration and mission-related investments.

Grant making in 2006 is projected at \$8m and is anticipated to rise to \$25m per year over the next five years. The Program Officer joins a growing team of 12 staff, including four Program Officers responsible for a specific geographical region of the world (African Rift Valley; Central Asia and Turkey; the Greater American Southwest and Northern Australia), and a Program Specialist who strengthens the landscape ecology and related components of these programs more generally. This new position would develop existing TCF grant making in the "Cross Cutting" program, where grantmaking to date

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has been handled on a more piecemeal basis. (For details of existing programs and list of current grantees please consult the website [www.christensenfund.org](http://www.christensenfund.org).)

**The Grantmaking Remit for the New Program Officer**

The hire of a new Program Officer for the Global Bio-Cultural Initiative is intended to enable development of an ambitious and strategic grantmaking program within and around the following issues that are core to TCF's new mission and goals:

- Building and sharing practical knowledge and understanding worldwide around bio-cultural diversity, stewardship, landscape, resilience, and adaptive change in the context of globalization;
- Funding projects of artistic expression to reach global publics to re-shape appreciation of how biological and cultural richness are interdependent and require passionate attention;
- Developing collaborative platforms for new global efforts to sustain diversity; including in such neglected areas as agro-biodiversity (especially in relation to the Vavilovian centers of domestication) and the global diversity of music (and associated forms of cultural expression), especially that linked to place;
- Supporting education, leadership and networking opportunities for community activists and their allies in the culture and environment field to enable them to gain and share experience, develop leadership, influence international institutions, and build a global movement; and
- Financing activities of San Francisco Bay Area institutions concerned with these issues locally and worldwide.

We seek a visionary with imagination and energy to make real change. They will be passionate about diversity and indigenous issues with a particular talent for understanding how to connect new ideas, traditional stewardship and international efforts. They will be a networker and team player, finding allies in other funders and international institutions. The grant budget for this program will grow from \$1.5m to perhaps \$3m/year over the next several years.

**Responsibilities**

Reporting to the Executive Director of The Christensen Fund (TCF), the Program Officer for the Global Bio-Cultural Initiative will be responsible for:

- Developing grant making strategies and articulating them to potential grantees and other stakeholders

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- Reviewing, developing and recommending grant proposals for approval, and monitoring grantee implementation, working with Grants Administration staff
- Collaborating with colleagues at The Christensen Fund and other foundations to craft, finance and implement programs
- Maintaining close knowledge of the ideas, issues and institutions working in their field of responsibility
- Partnering as appropriate with grantees to advance their institutional development and program achievement, and participating in their conferences and other events
- Helping grantees and other relevant organizations network and learn from each other both locally and internationally
- Working (including with outside reviewers) to evaluate the impact of grantees and grant making strategies and recommending program adjustments accordingly
- Sharing their expertise and imagination with other TCF staff in pursuit of the organization's overall programming and mission
- Presenting grant making strategies, grantmaking progress reviews, key proposed grants, impact evaluations and other briefings to the TCF Board of Trustees
- Developing the Links and Resources area of The Christensen Fund website as a resource for the field – bringing together relevant materials and linking people with the work of TCF grantees and others on these issues around the world.

This position would be based in the San Francisco Bay Area (Palo Alto) and require extensive international travel.

**Traits and Skills**

The staff of The Christensen comprise a diverse and lively-minded team who work with energy and humor to make a difference in a deeply troubled world.

The following are required characteristics for this position:

- Deep understanding of the connections between biological and cultural diversity;
- Familiarity with realities of local stewardship and grassroots struggles as well as with the institutions, associations and research groups working internationally on these issues, and especially with how to connect these two;

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- Superior written and oral communication skills and an ability to listen to and respect applicants, grantees and other stakeholders;
- Well organized and self sufficient, able to manage time and work under pressure; and
- A demonstrated ability and inclination to work as part of a team with appropriate management experience for potential leadership responsibilities.

**Education and Background**

A graduate degree in an environmental or social science field required; with particular knowledge of bio-cultural diversity, stewardship, landscape, resilience, and indigenous peoples.

The successful candidate is likely to have combined research and advocacy with practical engagement in supporting local and global initiatives and in putting ideas and creativity to work in support of change.

Substantial international experience is essential, multi-lingualism expected.

Prior employment in a grant making foundation, or experience partnering with such foundations would be an advantage.

**Compensation and Terms of Employment**

Terms would be a three year renewable contract, with relocation assistance.

The position is available immediately and it is hoped that the new Program Officer can join by mid 2006.

An excellent salary and benefits package commensurate with qualifications and experience will be provided.

Program Officers are encouraged to maintain active intellectual and creative engagement in the development of their fields of specialty, in particular as these advance the mission and strategies of the TCF and its grantee communities.

**Applications**

To apply please send a cover letter and cv to [resumes@christensenfund.org](mailto:resumes@christensenfund.org).

If you prefer to send your application by post please send to: Mayumi Fujio Morrow, 394 University Avenue, Palo Alto CA 94301, USA, marked "Confidential - Application".

Applications must be received by Wednesday, January 31st, 2006.

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*The Christensen Fund is an equal opportunities employer  
Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*