The Center for Religion and Media at NYU has received funding from The Henry R. Luce Initiative on Religion in International Affairs for a new project on Religious Stakes in Digital Times: Scholars and Journalists in Conversation.

Religious Stakes in Digital Times: Scholars and Journalists in conversation will initiate new work on the role of religion in international affairs. Carrying forward an evolving sense of what “international” means, the grant will foster new research, writing, and exchange on the role of religion in the world today. As Professor Angela Zito, co-director of the Center for Religion and Media (CRM) and principle investigator on the grant, explains, “We understand international to mean something that comprises both us and them, inextricably linked by, and overflowing beyond, borders that are increasingly blurred through digital instantaneous communication. Religious experience, like so many other forms of experience in a digitally linked world, travels fast, and travels globally.” She describes further how this insight prompted the Center to enlarge its idea of an ‘international frame’ to include explicitly American religious life, saying, “It’s time to think of everyone, ourselves especially, as international, as interlinked in the digital world.” Tracking this linkage through religion is crucial. The Center’s team, including co-Director Faye Ginsburg and program coordinator and editor of its online magazine, Kali Handelman, are convinced that one cannot overlook the importance of experience on the ground or the knowledge acquired through deep study—the human, corporeal elements brought by journalists and scholars to broadening our understanding of religion in an internationalizing, globalizing world.

Joining the Center in conversation about religious stakes in digital times will be scholars and journalists who are able to take a step back and write thoughtfully and critically about what we talk about when we talk about religion. The grant will support its online magazine, The Revealer: a review of religion and media, published by the Center since 2003, along with a new post-doctoral fellow each academic year for three years to join the team in writing and programming with them. They will seek “scholars with projects in hand who want to engage with other academics, journalists, and activists as part of their work.”

The Revealer publishes work that reflects upon religion as a key point of intersection between beliefs, practices, politics, representation, economics, and identity, where the important forces that shape individuals, societies, and their relationship to each other play out. For writers, this can mean pointing a wider lens at the way others in the media cover an issue, or reviewing a book, or doing on-the-ground reporting on a situation. The magazine publishes blog posts, long form reporting, arts and culture reviews, first person narratives, and photography.

For this post-doctoral fellowship the Center will seek scholars with projects in hand who wish to engage with other academics, journalists, and activists as part of their work. The successful candidate is doing innovative work in their field and has demonstrated interest in writing for a public (i.e., non-academic) readership in a style that is critically rigorous. The position would serve as a good stepping-stone for scholars beginning academic careers as well as academically trained writers pivoting into other lines of work. Professor Zito says, “We are seeking public intellectuals in all senses of the term.”

For more information about the program, visit: https://wp.nyu.edu/crm/digital-religion-2/

Information about applying for the post-doctoral fellowships will be available soon.

For more information about this program’s sponsor, the Henry R. Luce Initiative on Religion in International Affairs, visit: http://www.hluce.org/hrlucereelintaff.aspx.