



advancing  
children's learning  
in a digital age

## Cooney Center Fellows Program 2010-2011

The mission of the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop is to foster innovation in children's learning through digital media. Founded in 2007 as a dynamic resource for the educational media field, the Cooney Center supports action research, encourages partnerships to connect child development experts and educators with interactive media and technology leaders, and mobilizes public and private investment in promising and proven new media technologies for children. The Cooney Center focuses on the development of traditional and 21st century literacies among elementary school-age children, and aims to serve those from underserved and underrepresented populations in particular. For more information, visit <http://www.joanganzcooneycenter.org>.

### Fellows Program Overview

The Cooney Fellows Program encourages research, innovation, and dissemination to promote children's literacy learning. Cooney Fellows participate in a wide range of projects that address gaps in the knowledge base and, in doing so, develop broad exposure to scholarship, policy, and practice in the field of digital media and learning. This professional development program offers opportunities to:

- Conduct research on digital media use among elementary school-age children;
- Publish research that responds to practical industry and practitioner needs;
- Help expand the influence research has in government, education, philanthropy, and industry decision making; and
- Develop new skills and perspectives that are critical to becoming a leader in the field of digital media and learning.

The Cooney Fellows Program attracts a wide range of talented applicants who have expertise in digital media and/or in the fields of communication, child development, education, learning sciences, psychology, computer science, design, and public policy. The program allows early career investigators to participate in research, program development, dissemination, and design and production activities. Current and former Fellows have led research investigations and published reports and articles on digital media innovations, industry trends, and policy solutions. They have also developed public presentation and media outreach skills and contributed to the overall growth of the Cooney Center.

## The Fellowship

For a period of one year beginning in Fall 2010, the Fellow will work in residence at the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop, which is located in New York City. The Fellow will undertake an independent research project of his/her choosing, which he/she should outline in the application process. Fellows also play a substantive role in ongoing Cooney Center projects and initiatives, and participate in the day-to-day operations of the Center, including publication production, annual leadership forum planning, and contributing to the website and newsletter. Fellows occasionally travel to present research for dissemination and professional development purposes.

The Cooney Center's major initiatives for 2010-11 include:

- **Boys & Girls Club of America Club Tech**  
The Cooney Center is working with national leaders in digital media to jump-start the creation of 10 new "programs of excellence" which are scheduled to roll-out in major cities in the 2010 and 2011 fiscal years. To ensure sound implementation and impact of the redesigned Club Techs, the JGCC will convene a research advisory group to take place in a second phase of design and development support in fiscal year 2011.
- **Cooney Center Prizes for Innovation in Children's Learning**  
The Cooney Center Prizes is a new program that will award cash prizes and provide ongoing business planning support and mentorship to a new generation of children's media entrepreneurs and visionaries. The goal of the program is to identify, inspire, nurture, and scale breakthrough ideas in children's digital media and learning.
- **Intergenerational Video Game for Literacy Learning**  
Sesame Workshop is partnering with Carnegie Mellon University and the USC Game Innovation Lab to create and test two video games based on *The Electric Company* and *Sesame Street* properties. The games will utilize cutting-edge technologies to scaffold learning and engagement in order to support 6-8-year-olds in advancing their literacy competencies. The Cooney Center will participate in the formative evaluation of the games.
- **Mobile Learning Initiatives**  
Advances in mobile technologies are showing enormous untapped educational potential for today's generation. Mobile learning is a growing line of work for the Cooney Center, extending into our publications, prizes program, and a groundbreaking partnership with the Nokia Research Center.
- **Third Annual Leadership Forum**  
The Annual Leadership Forum brings together thought leaders in science and technology, informal and formal education, entertainment media, research, philanthropy, and policy to create a strategy for scaling-up effective models of teaching and learning for children. The 2009 event, Breakthrough Learning in a Digital Age, was convened at Google Headquarters and 1000 people participated both on-site and virtually.

## Eligibility

Early career investigators, including recent graduates of masters and doctoral programs, as well as current doctoral students wishing to supplement their studies, are encouraged to apply. In the case of current graduate students, fellowship activities may be part of developing a dissertation proposal, related to dissertation research or writing, or related to the student's postgraduate professional interests. Applicants with prior work and/or research experience in the field of digital media and learning are preferred.

## Stipend

The Fellow will receive a stipend of up to \$50,000 for the period of one year. He/She may also pursue financial support through outside contracts as long as they do not conflict with the fellowship residency requirements. Unfortunately, the Cooney Center cannot provide relocation expenses or health care benefits.

## Application Process

Interested candidates should submit the following to the Cooney Center:

- A curriculum vitae or resume
- Writing sample (about 1000 words)
- Concise personal statement (about 800 words), describing background and relevant past experience, as well as proposed research topic(s) and their relevance to the Cooney Center's mission and activities
- Contact details of a faculty member who may serve as a reference and who is committed to providing intellectual guidance during the fellowship period

The application deadline is **March 31, 2010**. Direct any inquiries and email application materials to [cooneyfellows@sesameworkshop.org](mailto:cooneyfellows@sesameworkshop.org). Hard copies may also be sent to:

Lori Takeuchi  
Director of Research  
Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop  
One Lincoln Plaza, 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10023

You may call Lori Takeuchi at 212-875-6830 with inquiries about the program or your application.

The Cooney Center will contact select candidates for initial telephone interviews and then invite finalists to meet in person in New York City (sorry, we cannot pay for travel). The 2010-2011 Cooney Center Fellow will be announced by May 21, 2010.