

Post-Doctoral Opportunity

Exploring distinct indigenous knowledge systems to inform fisheries governance and management on Canada's coasts

September 2012

BACKGROUND:

Fisheries decision-making processes, influenced primarily by western science-based knowledge systems, have been unsuccessful in managing Canada's fisheries effectively. This failure is further exacerbated by the growing challenges arising from climate induced changes on Canada's three coasts and inland areas. As well, Canada's current hierarchical governance regime is at odds with stakeholder demands for involvement in decision-making and the growing legal recognition to Aboriginal and treaty rights and Title. This approach to fisheries governance is also in conflict with the government's goal of implementing a holistic, place-based ecosystem approach to fisheries. In contrast to the current federal regime, indigenous knowledge systems are based on a world view and values that is place-based and personal, rooted in a shared history, holistic, experiential and transmitted in oral language that is culturally dependent. Given the growing interplay between federal level and indigenous decision makers and the efforts underway in Canadian legislation to support the use of indigenous knowledge, the overarching goal of this research is to improve fisheries governance and management in Canada by understanding how indigenous knowledge systems can enhance the current regime for decision-making.

The acquired knowledge will serve to highlight the challenges and opportunities available to both indigenous (First Nations and Inuit) and non-indigenous decision makers and users to enhance fisheries governance in Canada. Key research questions focus on examining the extent to which western and indigenous knowledge systems influence fisheries governance at multiple levels and understanding how distinct IKSs can improve current efforts, given the complexities of ecosystems and uncertainties posed by climate-induced changes.

The partners are pan-Canadian with linkages to international fisheries and indigenous networks beneficial to the project's success. They represent indigenous governance and research institutions with expertise in knowledge systems and fisheries management (the Assembly of First Nations, British Columbia First Nations Fisheries Council, Unama'ki Institute for Natural Resources and the Government of Nunavut) and indigenous and non-indigenous scholars with complementary expertise in aboriginal scholarship and fisheries governance from Dalhousie University, University of Guelph, University of Toronto and Vancouver Island University. The partnership spans four regions in Canada (Atlantic, Pacific, Arctic and Inland) and is committed to full and equal involvement in all aspects of the research and has a mutually-developed governance structure that is inclusive and based on consensus.

Our Partnership includes academic, community and government partners and supports innovative research, capacity building, and collaborative learning in each of the four regions described above. This project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

RESPONSIBILITIES:

We are seeking a post doctoral fellow (PDF) who will undertake independent research and work with the project leadership team to help coordinate project activities to support the project goals. The position may be based at any of the academic partner universities and will require substantial interaction with members of the partnership. The PDF will also assist with project leadership at the Canadian study sites, and support comparative analysis and knowledge mobilization activities. In summary, the responsibilities of the position include:

- Undertake self directed research within the proposal guidelines, focusing initially on understanding the knowledge systems that influence fisheries-related decision-making processes of the Canadian federal government at each of the four regions in Canada
- Assist in project leadership in each study site
- Assist with the comparative analysis between region
- Assist with knowledge mobilization activities, and organizing communication among project partners

The position will commence September 1, 2012 or as soon as a suitable candidate can be found. The period for employment is one year (with the opportunity for an addition year) and candidates must have completed their PhD within the past 3 years. Salary will be at standard SSHRC PDF rates.

ATTRIBUTES OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE:

The ideal candidate will resemble the following profile

- A highly motivated individual who cares about enhancing fisheries management in Canada
- Recently completed PhD (within 3 years)
- Familiarity/experience with a variety of research methods and techniques
- Leadership experience working in a team environment involving supervision and support of cross cultural team members
- Project management experience in terms of field logistics, budget management, communications, etc
- Expertise in the project themes: fisheries governance, indigenous knowledge systems, western knowledge systems, human-nature interactions, knowledge mobilization, etc
- Experience with a variety of knowledge mobilization activities and strategies ranging from traditional (e.g. project reports, journal articles, powerpoint presentations, etc) to other non- traditional approaches such as public workshops, open houses, community workshops, radio, TV, etc.

TO APPLY:

Please send a CV, cover letter and the names and contact information for 3 references to Dr. Lucia Fanning: lucia.fanning@dal.ca

Applications received prior to June 20, 2012 will be given preference.

Eligible applications from First Nations or Inuit applicants will be given preference.