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For immediate release



**Media
Release**

New foundation to support public interest journalism

Swinburne University's Institute for Social Research has established a not-for-profit foundation to help develop new models for funding and supporting journalism.

The Foundation for Public Interest Journalism will bring together journalists, publishers, academics and community representatives to develop and test the new models.

The institute's director, Professor Julian Thomas, has called for suitably qualified and experienced people from any of these sectors to nominate for membership of the foundation's board.

Nominations should include a 500-word statement about the applicant's relevant experience and what they can offer the foundation. They must be received by close of business on Tuesday 30 June.

Dr Margaret Simons, a journalist, author and lecturer at Swinburne, said the foundation was being developed because of concerns about the impact of the global collapse of the business models supporting traditional media forms.

"This is a serious threat to journalism, and therefore to the health of our society," she said.

"We will be seeking support from philanthropic organisations and individuals who appreciate the importance of a healthy, active media for our society."

Donations to the foundation will be tax deductible.

The foundation will support investigative, interactive journalism while exploring ways of making good journalism sustainable in the new media age.

It will fund worthy journalism projects initiated by either members of the public or practising journalists, and is likely to incorporate approaches from similar projects overseas, such as www.spot.us

Projects will be assessed on their capacity to serve the public interest, with priority given to issues that are under-reported by the traditional media.

As well as publishing works of journalism, the foundation will make a major contribution to journalism education and research.

The foundation is the brainchild of a group of journalists and publishers who have been working with Swinburne University over the past year.

It is expected to be operational by the end of 2009.

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