Mobile Context Modeling Fellowship

Offered by the Center for Mobile Creativity at the Parsons School of Art, Media and Technology. Sponsored by Nokia Research Center, Palo Alto.

Two (2) $2,500 Fellowships are offered for the Spring 2010 semester to qualifying BFA or MFA degree candidates enrolled in a Parsons Design and Technology, Communication Design, Photography, or other relevant program. The Fellowship will also include funded travel to Nokia Research Center, Palo Alto to present outcomes to sponsoring researchers. Devices and pre-paid GSM services will also be provided to Fellowship recipients.

Fellowship Agenda
During the summer of 2009, Parsons partnered with the Nokia Research Centers in Palo Alto and Beijing to conduct a field test user study of rich context modeling software offered to universities to capture mobile device sensor data. Nearly 70 participants generated a substantial quantity of mobile context data in China over 5 weeks, including geo-positioning (GPS and GSM), co-location/co-proximity (Bluetooth), communications (SMS and voice log) and other data.

The purpose of the fellowship is to fund a research deliverable that constructs an interactive visualization of this context modeling data. Ideas include a text-message and photo-mapping interface that geo-positions SMS and images in time and space allowing behavior patterns and recognition algorithms to be further observed and developed. The initiative aims to serve the social sciences and the arts towards new ways of understanding modeled contexts by realizing that humans now carry sensor-based devices and participate in a wide-area data-driven project that indexes the physical world and captures behavior patterns. This data may allow us to better understand social clustering and the vectors of spatial-temporal communications.

Possibilities include developing applications and frameworks for the Summer 2010 Parsons China trip.

For information on the NRC Rich Context Modeling initiative, see http://research.nokia.com/research/rich_context_modeling

Candidate Requirements
Applicants should be familiar with mobile platforms and networks, web data technologies including JSON as integrated into database systems, mapping APIs and dynamic interface design. Participants in the China Summer 2009 trip will enjoy an advantage in understanding the actual context of the mobile device data. Fellowship deliverables will include functional prototypes with source code and a research paper written in ACM format.

Application Requirements
Applicants must write a cover letter stating their intent in participating in the research and design project and include a brief one-page proposal of a preliminary, non-binding design outcome in written and visual mockup form. Two cross-disciplinary applicants may collaborate and co-apply for the Fellowship (e.g., MFA Design & Technology student proficient in data-driven application design teams up with a BFA Communication Design student proficient in information design, user interface design and radical cartography).

Application Deadline
Applicants must submit letter of intent and brief proposal to David Carroll, Director of the Center for Mobile Creativity, by email at CarrollD@newschool.edu no later than January 15, 2010. Winners announced at start of semester.