

Applications for the 2008 New Zealand Mental Health Media Grants opened 1 March

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Media Release

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The New Zealand Mental Health Media Grants, launched last year, opened for 2008 applications on 1 March and look for proposals that will help reduce stigma and discrimination by informing the public about mental health issues and experiences.

The Media Grants offer a total grant pool of \$50,000 across two categories (journalism and creative) with grants of up to \$12,000 for each project. They are administered by the Mental Health Foundation and funded as part of the Like Minds, Like Mine programme.

In 2007, the Media Grants attracted 12 journalism applications and 30 creative applications.

Four recipients were chosen – Halina Ogonowska-Coates (journalism) and Jessica Le Bas, Jo Randerson and Debbie Hager (creative). All are currently completing their projects.

Halina believes there is potential for journalists to improve the public's understanding of mental health issues "and to play a critical role in reducing stigma and discrimination against people with mental illness."

Jo was interested in the focus of the grants because she sees society as diverse and full of wonderful and unique characters. "Our communities work well when we embrace our differences and don't separate each other into groups," she says.

Judi Clements, Chief Executive of the Mental Health Foundation says, "The 2007 recipients are very talented individuals, and we are looking forward to seeing their finished projects.

"We encourage all journalists, creative professionals or community groups who have a project idea that promotes positive messages about mental health to apply for a 2008 grant.

"Receiving a grant gives recipients a chance to discuss and work through ideas around mental health issues, and is an opportunity to shift people's thinking about mental illness and help break down the barriers of stigma and discrimination."

Applications for the Media Grants opened on 1 March and close 30 May 2008.

For more information, please contact the Mental Health Foundation, ph: (09) 300 7010, email: info@mediagrants.org.nz or visit website: www.mediagrants.org.nz

The New Zealand Mental Health Media Grants replace the Carter Center Fellowships offered to journalists in New Zealand from 2001 to 2005/6.

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