Templeton Research Fellow  
Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts  
Ryerson University

Overview: Throughout the history of philosophy, many arguments about the existence of God have been proposed. Some have defended theism, others atheism, and still others agnosticism. But while philosophers have been busy trying to determine whether or not God exists, they have often neglected to ask: “What difference would (or does) God’s existence make to the overall value of the world?” This research project will systematically investigate various answers that might be given to this profoundly important question. This project is supported and administered by Ryerson University (www.ryerson.ca) and is made possible through a generous grant from the John Templeton Foundation (www.templeton.org).

Purpose: The purpose of this Templeton Research Fellowship is to provide a semester-long period of uninterrupted research time for an outstanding philosopher to pursue ground-breaking research on any aspect(s) of this project. The appointment will be held during either the Summer 2015 semester or the Fall 2015 semester. The precise dates for the appointment will be determined by mutual agreement between the Project Leader and the successful applicant.

Qualifications: The successful applicant will be required to hold a PhD in Philosophy prior to June 1, 2015.

Duties: The successful applicant will be expected to conduct research full-time on one or more aspects of this research project, and to disseminate research findings in scholarly presentations and publications. This might involve considering one or more of the following:

- Are there facts of the matter about the axiological difference that God’s existence would (or does) make to the overall value of the world? If so, what sorts of facts, and how should we understand them? If not, why not?
- On what basis can one evaluate the difference that God’s existence would (or does) make to the overall value of the world?
- What are the philosophical advantages and disadvantages of each (or any) of the positions concerning the axiological effects of God’s existence?
- Which of the main views concerning the axiological effect(s) of God’s existence is most (or least) plausible? Why?
- Could God’s existence increase the world’s value in some respects but decrease it in others? Which respects, and why?
- Can it be reasonable to prefer God’s non-existence? If so, why? If not, why not?

Application Materials and Deadline: Applicants must ensure that the following items are submitted:

(i) CV
(ii) Research Proposal. This document should be no more than 3,000 words long (not including references) and should outline a specific research project, including plans for dissemination and publication for the relevant semester and beyond. Applicants should explain in clear language how their proposed research addresses the aims of this project.
(iii) Two confidential academic letters of reference. Letters of reference should speak to the qualities of the applicant in general, and also to the merit of the applicant’s research proposal in particular.

Selection Criteria: Applications will be evaluated by considering the following:

- Applicant’s research accomplishments to date (relative to career stage);
- Scholarly merit of the applicant’s research proposal;
- Degree to which the proposed research addresses the core topics of the project; and
- Potential impact of the research in furthering our understanding of the topics identified.

All application materials should be submitted electronically to the Project Leader, Dr. Klaas Kraay, at kraay@ryerson.ca

Deadline to Apply: Tuesday, March 31st, 2015 (16:30 EST)

Terms: No grant funds shall be used to support projects or activities outside of Canada. The successful applicant will be offered a stipend/salary in the amount of $23,000 CAD (less applicable taxes), provided that he or she spends the relevant semester at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada. Funds will be made available to defray relocation expenses and accommodation (to a maximum of $4,000 CAD). In addition, Ryerson University will provide office space, a telephone line, a desktop computer, an email account, access to printing/scanning facilities, and library access. The successful applicant will receive funding for research-related books and periodicals (to a maximum of $1,000 CAD) and funding for research travel, meals, and accommodations (to a maximum of $3,000 CAD). (If the successful applicant currently holds a tenure-track position, or equivalent, and has teaching duties in the relevant semester, up to $23,000 CAD can be made available to secure teaching buy-out from his or her home institution in lieu of a stipend/salary. In this case, there will be no residency requirement. This option is restricted to applicants employed at Canadian post-secondary institutions).

About Ryerson University: Ryerson University is known for innovative programs built on the integration of theoretical and applied learning. More than 95 undergraduate and graduate programs are distinguished by a professionally focused curriculum and strong emphasis on excellence in teaching, research, and creative activities. Ryerson University is located in the multi-cultural heart of downtown Toronto. Ryerson University is strongly committed to fostering diversity within our community. We welcome those who would contribute to the further diversification of our staff, our faculty and its scholarship including, but not limited to, women, visible minorities, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, and persons of any sexual orientation or gender identity.

About The John Templeton Foundation: The John Templeton Foundation serves as a philanthropic catalyst for discoveries relating to the Big Questions of human purpose and ultimate reality. The Foundation supports research on subjects ranging from complexity, evolution, and infinity to creativity, forgiveness, love, and free will. It encourages civil, informed dialogue among scientists, philosophers, and theologians and between such experts and the public at large, for the purposes of definitional clarity and new insights. The Foundation’s vision is derived from the late Sir John Templeton’s optimism about the possibility of acquiring “new spiritual information” and from his commitment to rigorous scientific research and related scholarship. The Foundation’s motto, “How little we know, how eager to learn,” exemplifies its support for open-minded inquiry and its hope for advancing human progress through breakthrough discoveries.

The successful applicant will be notified by April 15th, 2015.