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**Announcing the Inaugural Lieutenant Governor's
B.C. Journalism Fellowship Recipient**

***Francesca Fionda to produce a long-form piece of journalism for The Tyee
looking at climate displacement***

(Vancouver, B.C.) -- In the spirit of supporting a healthy democracy with a thriving journalistic community, the Honourable Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, with the support of the Government House Foundation and in partnership with the Jack Webster Foundation, is pleased to announce the first recipient of the new Lieutenant Governor's B.C. Journalism Fellowship is Francesca Fionda, an experienced and award-winning investigative/data journalist, and journalism instructor/adjunct professor. The fellowship was offered and designed to afford a working journalist the opportunity to develop a well substantiated, long-form piece of journalism to shed light on a subject of importance to British Columbians.

Ms. Fionda has been awarded \$25,000 to produce a long-form piece of journalism that will explore the gaps in support for evacuees of disasters in British Columbia. Over the coming months, she will investigate parts of this issue that have not been deeply covered. The findings of this investigation could have major impacts on preparedness and planning for people in B.C. displaced by disasters that are now occurring far too often. The Tyee has committed to publishing Ms. Fionda's work later this year. The fellowship selection was determined by an esteemed jury of community leaders and former journalists.

"This year alone, our province was hit with disaster after disaster," said Ms. Fionda. "It's critical that we look deeply at how we can support communities as they rebuild and where we're falling short. I'm so grateful for this tremendous opportunity to create long-form journalism and hope that reporting on this issue will highlight ways forward through the climate crisis."

"What an honour to see Francesca receive the inaugural Lieutenant Governor's B.C. Journalism Fellowship, and for we at The Tyee to be able to publish what I'm sure will be a powerful piece of reporting in the public interest," said Tyee editor-in-chief David Beers. "We salute the Honourable Janet Austin, the Government House Foundation and the Jack Webster Foundation

for creating this source of support allowing ambitious projects. It's a vital building block in constructing a diverse and vibrant new journalism landscape."

"This inaugural fellowship project will analyze the displacement of British Columbians from the increasingly severe climate disasters we are experiencing across our province," said the Honourable Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia. "The news outlets we rely on in our democracy to maintain an informed citizenry are under resourced and eroding, in a period of increased polarization and diminishing trust in the fact-based storytelling offered by professional journalists. Ms. Fionda has a talent for illuminating complex issues by utilizing data analysis to weave vibrant, informative stories allowing readers to more fully understand the impacts and nuances of these challenges we face."

"We are incredibly pleased to partner with the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia on this program. Providing journalists with the time and resources to go above and beyond their typical level of coverage will ensure that some of the under-reported but crucial challenges in B.C. receive the deep, complex storytelling they deserve," said Joy Jennissen, Chair of the Board of the Jack Webster Foundation.

Details regarding eligibility and requirements for applications for next year's fellowship can be found [here](#). Application intake for 2023 will begin starting in early 2023 with the recipient(s) being announced in spring of 2023. At this time, the Lieutenant Governor's B.C. Journalism Fellowship is committed to delivering the annual award for three years: 2022, 2023, and 2024.

About Government House Foundation

The Government House Foundation was created in 1988 to preserve, enhance and support the legacy of Government House, the ceremonial home of all British Columbians. Resources raised by the Foundation also help fund the legacy programs of Lieutenant Governors past and present.

The Honourable Janet Austin is the 30th Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, acting as the representative of the Crown in the province, and serving British Columbians through the themes of her mandate: Reconciliation, diversity and inclusion, and engagement in democracy. Her Honour's previous role was that of CEO of the YWCA Metro Vancouver; her professional career includes work with BC Housing and Big Sisters, in addition to serving on various boards, such as Translink, and the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade.

About the Jack Webster Foundation

The Jack Webster Foundation was established in 1986, upon the retirement of its namesake, who was Western Canada's best-known and most influential reporter, in order to foster and celebrate excellence in journalism, protect the public interest for British Columbian's, and create a community where trusted outstanding journalism thrives.

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