

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. Access: <http://www.federalreserve.gov>.

The Federal Reserve is an elaborate system of federal organizations working together to oversee monetary and banking policies. The system is composed of a seven-member Board of Governors, 12 Federal Reserve banks, 25 branches, and member banks. The Federal Reserve was established as the United States' central bank in 1913 to assist with stabilizing the money supply and to facilitate overall banking operations. These nationwide banking entities influence currency valuation, the prices of goods, economic growth, and overall financial stability through the operations and policy implementations of the Federal Open Market Committee.



The main page is well organized and contains 11 hyperlinked choices located on the left side of the screen. The options include areas such as "Monetary Policy," "Banking Information and Regulation," "Economic Research and Data," and "Publications and Education Resources." Above these options, visitors will see a handy "Search" box to search all Federal Reserve Web pages. Other highlights are the clearly stated mission, "What's New," "What's Next," an index, a site map, and FAQs. "Features" includes information about Federal Reserve online learning opportunities. "Breaking News" offers a few major headlines updated daily and "Recent Statistical Releases" showcases statistical information on topics of current interest.

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The site provides one-stop access to Federal Reserve data collection and value-added research. The majority of the earlier print publications are now available free-of-charge electronically in full-text format.

Researchers can access approximately 126 current issues of economic publications from the Index of Federal Reserve Economic Research link; *Federal Reserve Bulletin* full-text articles from 1997 to the current date; and the *Beige Book*, the popular name for the *Summary of Commentary on Current Economic Conditions by Federal Reserve District*, and a noteworthy source for regional economic analyses. The site provides links to central banks of the world and the Bank for International Settlements, which are important sites when investigating foreign interest rates. There is also information for consumers, most of which is also available in Spanish, and tools for educators.

This valuable Internet resource has come to serve as a centralized platform for Federal Reserve operations and activities and can be used by Federal Reserve personnel, bankers, policymakers, and economists, as well as individuals researching banking outlooks and trends.—*Caroline Geck, Kean University, cgeck@kean.edu*

The Institute for Public Relations. Access: <http://www.instituteforpr.com/>.

The Institute for Public Relations (IPR) is an independent foundation dedicated to the science behind the art of public relations. The institute operates through the collaborative effort of a number of trustees, which



include academics and business professionals. The institute itself aims to serve a wide range of groups, focusing on leaders

in the field, as well as educators, researchers, and students.

There are four main areas of interest on this site. First, in the "About" section, we are

provided with a description of the organization, its purpose, and future goals, as well as a strategic plan. Unfortunately, the information in this section lacks any concrete statements about goals and objectives. That aside, the focus of IPR is on collaboration, education, and research, which can only serve to enhance the status of the profession.

The second area of interest, "Research," is rich with relevant information. In its attempt to focus and expand on the intellectual foundations of public relations, IPR provides a collection of documents that will be useful to those practicing and studying in this field. The documents included here have been produced by IPR and are written by researchers and professionals in the field.

"Research" currently includes approximately 40 documents on topics ranging from "Affordability" to "Reputation." If the institute is able to meet the targets it has set out for itself, this section should continue to grow. "Measurement & Evaluation" is by far the richest section, including an additional 30 documents. The items contained in "Measurement & Evaluation" include valuable tools and guidance on measuring the success and effectiveness of public relations programs and activities.

The document titled "Bibliography of Public Relations Measurement," provides a useful compilation of a variety of resources encompassing basic information on research and measurement, the origins of measurement techniques, and issues of reliability and validity.

The "Education" section includes information on summits, lectures, and conferences, including topical summaries and links to conference proceedings. Finally, "News" includes a list of press releases distributed by IPR over the past three years.

The main feature of the IPR site is the useful "Research" section, which in its early stages has made contributions of up-to-date, relevant material in public relations research.—*Patricia Green, McMaster University, greenpa@mcmaster.ca*

IRE: Investigative Reporters and Editors.

Access: <http://www.ire.org>.

The front page of the IRE Web site won't win any awards for Web design, but the resources and links provided make it one of the premier journalism portals on the Web.



The sheer number of resources, initiatives, centers, and programs under the auspices of IRE result in an excessive number of links and text

on the homepage. However, visitors with an interest in investigative journalism will find overcoming any initial difficulties in navigation well worth the time and effort.

IRE is a nonprofit organization located at the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Journalism that was formed in 1975 to foster excellence in investigative journalism by assisting journalists in locating news sources, improving their newsgathering techniques, and providing resources for the development of story ideas. One of the resources developed in support of this mission, and one of the most valuable parts of the IRE site, is the "Resource Center," a research library consisting of more than 20,000 investigative stories and more than 2,000 tip-sheets for covering specific issues. Also useful is the Beat Source Guide, which offers a searchable database of Web-based resources organized by beat, such as education, environment, politics, and religion.

Additionally, IRE sponsors a number of individual centers, and each provides valuable resources in their area of emphasis. With First Amendment and freedom of information (FOI) issues a primary concern of investigative journalists, the "Freedom of Information Center" is one of IRE's key elements and is "designed to be a central repository for IRE information about FOI activities and links to other valuable FOI resources." The "Campaign Finance Information Center" provides tips and resources for investigating political contributions on the national, state, and local

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artwork, and artifacts relating to African exploration and Natural History after his first visits to East Africa in 1956 and 1958. The Train Collection holds first-person accounts of expeditions to Africa, ranging from those of French scientist and traveler Francois le Vaillant in the 1780s to a safari undertaken by Ernest Hemingway in the 1950s. Missionary David Livingstone and journalist Henry Stanley, as well as linguist

Sir Richard F. Burton and President Theodore Roosevelt, are well represented with numerous books by and about them, manuscript letters, privately printed materials, dozens of photographs, and other ephemera. Some of the published books in the collection are presentation copies autographed by the author, while others have original artwork or engravings. Many of the 19th-century works have pristine gold-stamped bindings. *zc*

(“Internet Reviews” continued from page 36)

levels, and the “IRE Educators’ Center” offers “a meeting place for journalism educators to share ideas, course materials and resources.”

Among the many other resources on the site is a section with compiled links, tip-sheets and other resources on science, health, and environmental reporting, as well as a subsite called 2000Census.org, which was developed to help journalists better use the census for in-depth investigative stories and to archive and preserve government census data.

While much of the site is freely accessible, one of the drawbacks is the number of resources that are restricted to IRE members only. Annual membership costs are relatively inexpensive, but membership is limited to professional journalists (active or retired), journalism educators and researchers, and journalism students. Despite these restrictions, the IRE site remains a valuable resource for students, librarians, and faculty affiliated with journalism programs or anyone with an interest in investigative reporting.—*Patrick Reakes, University of Florida, pjr@uflib.ufl.edu zc*

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