

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE MLW JOURNALISTS IN RESIDENT PROGRAM

October 2020 – September 2022

1. Purpose

MLW is dedicated to engaging with the public about its clinical research and health in general. One of the means of achieving this is through engaging with the media, as the media serve the public. The media help in shaping opinions on various health issues and encourage adoption of good health behaviors. One of the media engagement activities that MLW has been undertaking since 2012 is training the media in science reporting and thereby addressing challenges related to science reporting. In 2015 MLW changed the format of the trainings and now implements the Journalists in resident program (JIR). The JIR program pairs journalists to a researcher or a research group for a period of one year. In the one year the journalist and the researcher learn from one another. The following is the purpose of the program.

- Supporting journalists to communicate about health research science findings that can give the public knowledge on health issues by giving them access to researchers, scientific publications, and other news sources on science.
- Providing a platform for a sustained interaction and partnership between Journalists and scientists, and other actors in science.
- To enhance relationship between researchers and the media and facilitate a two-way interaction between researchers and journalists.
- To support journalists to write stories on MLW's newest or most significant scientific research outcomes by translating them into newsworthy ideas.
- To impart adequate skills and knowledge in science reporting in the journalists which they can use to identify and pursue health research issues of public interest and present the stories with accuracy, depth and impact to the public.

2. Recruitment Criteria

The following is the recruitment criteria: -

- Must have an interest and passion in health reporting.
- Must have at least two recently published/broadcast stories on health.
- Must belong to a well-known, accredited, and registered media house in Malawi.
- Must be able to work according to the agreed timelines and the terms of reference.

3. Implementation

- Twenty journalists will be recruited and will be attached/paired to specific MLW research teams where they will be able to pursue stories from that team. MLW will provide them with mentorship and resources.
- MLW shall involve the expertise of the researchers and media consultants who are part of the program in assessing the produced news stories.
- The journalists will be required to write and publish/broadcast at least two in depth stories during this period.
- Before the stories are published/broadcast scripts (for broadcast) and copies of the news material for print will be required to be sent to MLW for signing off by relevant researchers and the consultants through the Communications Department.
- During the residency, MLW will provide stipends of K50, 000 to each journalist per story (K20,000 to be given at the beginning and K30,000 when the story is published, the stipends will carter for transport, meals, and airtime.
- Should there be need for accommodation while pursuing stories, MLW will provide allowances to the journalists based on MLW rates.

I accept to be part of the Journalists in Resident Program

Signature:

Date: