

July 25, 2022

Deadline: August 30, 2022

Journalists travel grants for COP 27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt

MESHA is pleased to announce that 7 journalists from **eastern and southern Africa** (at least 50% women) will be awarded fellowships to cover the 27th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP27) as part its partnership with IDRC eastern and southern Africa office in Nairobi.

The 2022 MESHA fellows will attend and report on COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt from **November 7 to November 18, 2022**. Further, should the event be a hybrid one, we will support an additional 10 journalists to cover the COP in their home countries without travelling to Egypt.

Like its predecessor, COP27 represents a pivotal moment in the fight to combat climate change, being the first COP to take place in Africa since 2016 when Morocco hosted COP.

The fellows will receive support and guidance from seasoned climate change journalists affiliated with MESHA's Environment Desk and our in-house platform of trainers. The fellows will also participate in orientation activities, daily briefings, interviews with high-level officials, and other interactions organised by MESHA and her affiliates to inform and facilitate quality reporting on developments at COP27.

As currently envisioned (and subject to change), the Fellows would travel to Sharm El-Sheikh to attend part of the 11-day conference of the UN climate negotiations or do the reporting from their bases in home countries as stated above. The sponsored grantees will cover 7 days of the conference. The MESHA CEO will lead both groups.

MESHA will cover non-refundable economy-class airfare, accommodation, meals, travel insurance, and transportation costs to participate in the Fellowship.

We will also reimburse for meals and other transport expenses acquired in transit, including COVID-19 testing; and provide logistical support relating to the trip. We urge the grantees to ensure they get accreditation to attend the Conference in a timely manner.

However, the process of obtaining any necessary visas is the Fellow's individual responsibility, though MESHA may reimburse direct visa costs as charged by the embassy.

Prior to the start of COP27, Fellows will receive resources and technical support to help prepare for reporting at the conference, including participation in three science cafes, along with experts and also journalists that will be reporting on COP from their home countries. Fellows will participate in a series of specially designed activities, including orientation sessions with climate experts on the key issues at this COP, daily briefings, and interviews with high-level officials.

They will also be guided by MESHA mentors, who are senior journalists with experience in covering UN climate summits.

Fellows who will be supported to follow the proceedings online, will interview persons in their home countries, and file stories from their home stations/countries.

To be eligible for the Fellowship, the applicant must:

- Be a professional journalist from or representing an established media house and reporting from an eastern and southern African country.
- Have good command of the English language, French and/or Portuguese.
- Have previous experience reporting on climate change issues and clearly indicate the kinds of stories they might pursue while attending the conference.
- Fully accredited as a media representative by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- Have demonstrated experience in reporting on issues from a perspective of gender equality and social inclusion, with attention to intersecting and overlapping identities, lest prevailing power hierarchies be reinforced rather than opened up for greater understanding and questioning.
- Be available and willing to cover COP27 from their home country or to travel to Egypt to attend COP27 in person (indicate preference).
- Commit to participate in all Fellowship activities.
- Provide a letter of support from an editor, producer or supervisor who can confirm that applicant's news reports will be published or broadcast in an established media outlet. Freelancers are welcome to apply but must provide a letter of support from a media outlet for which they intend to report.

Criteria for evaluating applicants include the prospective Fellow's demonstrated experience covering climate change and other environmental topics, understanding of issues related to gender equality and social justice, clear reporting plans for the COP, the audience reach of the proposed media outlet, and diversity factors, such as sex, juniority/seniority, and geographical distribution across the Fellows.

Applicants are asked to submit samples of their work, which may be shared as documents or web links.

Stories can be in any language as long as they are accompanied by a short English and or French synopsis. However, a good command of English, Portuguese and or French is a prerequisite for participation in Fellowship activities. There will be emphasis on the ability to do multimedia stories for all the Fellows.

Fellows are free to report as they see fit, taking editorial independence into cognisance. They are also expected to include a strapline in their stories acknowledging the MESHA/IDRC Fellowship (if their media houses favour this request) and agree to allow MESHA to cross-post all stories produced as part of the Fellowship on the MESHA website and its local and regional partner sites (the Fellow's home media outlet can first publish the story).

Fellows are responsible for ensuring that they meet any requirements for travel to Egypt considering the fact that many countries are still coping with the spread of COVID-19 with the attendant added risks and operational challenges involved with international travel.

Applicants may also be asked to indicate that they understand that participation in the Fellowship in-person in Sharm El Sheikh requires compliance with government and venue requirements, which may include proof of vaccine status, mask mandates, quarantine protocols, and/or testing for COVID-19 before and during the conference.

Applicants may be required to sign risk acknowledgment documentation indicating that they understand and accept the risks associated with travel and also partaking in in-person meetings during a COVID-19 pandemic.

The applications subject, clearly marked MESHA COP27 TRAVEL GRANT 2022, shall be sent to the Media for Environment, Science, Health and Agriculture (MESHA) Secretariat via email info@meshascience.org. Each application must be accompanied by accessible links to the stories done in the past and with a letter from your editor committing to allow you to travel to COP27 and that s/he will publish stories filed from the Conference.

Deadline for submission of applications is August 30, 2022, 11:59pm Kenyan Time.

The verdict for the applications will be communicated to the applicants by September 20, 2022 via email.