



Call for Investigative Journalism Story Pitches

Call Number: 004/2022 (CFLI)

The Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe (VMCZ) is inviting journalists and documentary filmmakers to pitch story ideas on investigative journalism (IJ) unravelling issues affecting the minority groups such as homophobia, child abuse and violence against women. The targeted minority groups under this call are women, children and LGBTIQ2 communities.

This call for investigative story pitches on minority rights reporting is part of VMCZ's objective of capacitating the media with sensitive reporting skills on covering minority groups, with special focus on LGBTIQI community, Women's and Children's Rights, thereby creating a national tolerance through narrowing the gap of media coverage on minority rights and equip journalists and the public with knowledge and skills to help integrate minority groups into the social sphere.

The thrust of this call is to ensure that the media brings to the fore the challenges the different minority groups face so as to shape public perception on the minority groups and help strengthen respect for the human rights of minority groups.

Selection Criteria: Grants will be offered to journalists with the strongest applications. Applications will be judged on the quality of the story pitch, the applicant's journalism skills as indicated by their work samples, and evidence of support from the applicant's editor.

Pitches and investigative story ideas that will be supported should positively answer the following:

1. Is this an underreported issue of local concern?
2. Is the story breaking new ground?
3. Is the story likely to get traction or impact?
4. Is the reporter/outlet best positioned to tell the story?

Number of Required In-depth Investigative Stories: THREE ie ONE with a provided mentor and TWO on your own.

Each successful pitch will be supported with a ceiling payment in the amount of US \$600. The support shall cover direct costs that shall be incurred by the journalists in the field on the production of investigative journalism stories that are limited to courier services, transportation, communication, and lodging among other surface costs.

Deadline: Due date for submission of this application is COB Thursday, 10 November 2022. All applications should be submitted to: mediacomplaints@gmail.com and copied to programmes@vmcz.co.zw and director@vmcz.co.zw

Attachments: Please submit the completed application form with a **signed acknowledgment note from an editor** as a guarantee that your story will be published after a successful application process and production. Freelance journalists can make their applications directly.

{NB: DO NOT EDIT OR REMOVE ANY SECTIONS FROM THIS TEMPLATE- you can copy and paste this template to a fresh page to add more space for your answers}

COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS

Story Focus Area (the one you wish to be partnered with a mentor) (Tick appropriately)

Children Rights Women Rights LGBTQI+ Rights

FULL NAME: SEX:

Call Number: 004/2022 (CFLI)

AGE: (Tick appropriately; X Below 35years ; Y Above 35years.

MEDIA HOUSE: (If you are a freelance, indicate) Duty Station: (Indicate City/Town)

MEDIUM: (where the story/stories will be published/ name of media house)

FORMAT OF STORY: (how it will be presented (tick all applicable)

Print/Newspaper Online Video/Article Radio TV Documentary/Video

CONTACT DETAILS: (email & phone number)

PROJECT OVERVIEW (max 150 words)

Briefly summarize your topic & tell us what makes your approach different or unique. What is the expected traction/impact?

STORY PITCH (max 400 words) (Pitch stories not topics)

Story pitches must demonstrate research and answer the following KEY QUESTIONS: **WHY** is this story important? **WHO** are my sources? **WHAT** new ground are you breaking?, what is the magnitude (data/statistics)?

WHEN do you expect to **start** and **complete** the investigation stories? (Submit investigation timeline using the format below)

No	Date	Description	Means of verification	Sources/ Key Persons
1	eg 14 November 2022	One on One with mentor	Physical meeting	Mentor
2	Eg 21 November 2022	Eg gathering of facts, evidence	Eg cabinet minutes, treasury report, ministry or	Eg Cabinet secretary, treasurer, ministry

			women affairs procurement documents	procurement secretary
3	Eg 28 November 2022	Submission of 1 st Draft to the mentor	Story 1st Draft	Mentor & VMCZ
4				
5				
6				
7				
8	20 December 2022	Publishing of approved article	Story Link	Name of Publication

Briefly describe the other two stories you will write without a mentor. *Demonstrate research and answer the following KEY QUESTIONS: WHY is this story important? WHO are my sources? WHAT new ground are you breaking?, what is the magnitude (data/statistics)? Each story summary pitch should not be more than 300 words.*

PS. If you picked to be mentored for a LGBTQI story for example, then the other two stories should be on Women and Children Rights respectively.

Story 2:-----

Tick minority Group to be covered ie Children rights women rights LGBTQI community

Demonstrate research and answer the following KEY QUESTIONS: WHY is this story important? WHO are my sources? WHAT new ground are you breaking?, what is the magnitude (data/statistics)? Each story summary pitch should not be more than 300 words.

Story 3:-----

Tick minority Group to be covered ie Children rights Women rights LGBTQI community

Demonstrate research and answer the following KEY QUESTIONS: WHY is this story important? WHO are my sources? WHAT new ground are you breaking?, what is the magnitude (data/statistics)? Each story summary pitch should not be more than 300 words.

Please list Five Links of your work to demonstrate your skills.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Any questions regarding the call are answered between 0900rs to 1300hrs on Monday and Tuesday (7&8/11/2022) ONLY.

