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CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO THE 2022 GIRLS' SCIENCE CAMP

BACKGROUND

The Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST) has this year again organised a Girls' Science Camp targeting secondary school girls and those in first year at MUST but studying Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related programmes. The Girls Science Camp, among others, aims at motivating and inspiring girls to improve their performance in STEM and later make careers in STEM-related fields.

Across the globe, and in Africa specifically, girls' participation in STEM is very low. During public university selection, there are few girls selected and worse still is the fact that fewer are selected into STEM programmes. Those selected into these programmes at university level also lack inspiration and motivation to perform well and be retained. For example, during the recent selection, out of 7,410 students selected, 48 percent were girls and this was across all programmes offered by the six public universities in Malawi. However, for STEM-related programmes, the percentage for girls was much lower. This trend has to be reversed and the Girls Science Camp is one way of addressing the problem and ensuring that those currently in university, are retained.

SCIENCE CAMP

MUST, as a progressive and proactive University that prides itself in doing business unusual, wants to motivate and inspire girls in both secondary schools and at MUST to start liking

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and later performing well in STEM-related subjects with the aim of increasing their enrolment and retention in those areas at university level.

It is now seven years since MUST launched the Girls Science Camp. The camps have been running annually since the inaugural one in 2016 with a break in the past two years due to the effects of Covid-19 pandemic. The inaugural camp was solely organised by MUST through generous financial sponsorship from individuals, companies and organisations, too numerous to mention. Participating girls were drawn from various secondary schools across the country. The following year, MUST teamed up with Women in Science (WiSci) and World Learning, to organise a two and half weeks' camp that drew participants from the United States of America (USA), Zambia, Tanzania, Liberia, Rwanda, Uganda and the host, Malawi. In 2018, the camp was mounted in partnership with Advancing Girls' Education in Africa (AGE Africa). During the last edition in 2019, MUST worked with a range of partner organisations and this year, it has also approached several organisations as partners.

This year's Girls' Science Camp will run between September 21 and 28 with students expected to arrive at MUST campus on September 20, 2022. In addition to motivational talks and career guidance from role models in related fields, there will be lectures conducted by acclaimed experts in Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Engineering, Medical Science, Earth and Climate Science, Biology and other fields. The participants will also get hands-on experience in using state of the art science and technology facilities on campus to come up with various scientific projects, and given a feel of university life. They will

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also be given tips on various topics such as how to study, succeed in school generally and in STEM specifically, life skills, sexual and reproductive health, and life in university. They will also be engaged in sporting activities, cultural evening, visits to industry and excursions.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested students should apply to express their interest by indicating their name, age, form/class, school/institution, names and contacts of their sponsor i.e. parents or guardians and whether they have attended the camp before or not. The applicants should also indicate their ability to pay the **K250,000** participation fee. The University tries its best to acquire limited scholarships from well-wishers for deserving needy students who cannot afford the fees.

All applications should reach MUST on or before (insert date of submission of applications). Applications should be addressed to the following address or you can apply online by following this link: <https://my.forms.app/form/60b8d5789773ff06f0d6a793>. Deadline for receiving applications is September 17, 2022.

The University Registrar

Malawi University of Science and Technology

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Or send through email to: girlssciencecamp@must.ac.mw

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Applicants can download the application from the university's webpage and through a link on our Twitter and Facebook accounts. You can also apply online through our webpage: www.must.ac.mw

For inquiries, please call **Lizzie Nyirenda** on **0888 874 383** or email: lnyirenda@must.ac.mw

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