

Merck Foundation Calls for Applications for “Merck More Than a Mother” Film Awards in partnership with Ghana First Lady

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Merck

Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Merck KGaA Germany announces the Call for Application of “Merck More Than a Mother” Film Awards in partnership with H.E. REBECCA AKUFO-ADDO, The First Lady of Ghana, together with Ghana National Film and TV Institute (NAFTI).

NAFTI Students are invited to create a Film, Drama or Docudrama with the aim to deliver strong and influential messages to empower infertile women and say “No to Infertility Stigma”.

The applicants are requested to send their entries as a Youtube link to: info@merck-foundation.com. The closing date for applications is 30th of June 2019.

“I strongly believe that art plays a significant role in raising awareness about sensitive topics like infertility, hence will contribute significantly to break the stigma around infertile women in Africa. One of the great challenges today is that we often feel untouched by the problems of others, even when we can easily do something to help. Giving people access to data most often leaves them feeling overwhelmed and disconnected, not empowered and poised for action. This is where art can make a difference. We decided to launch this competition to select the best film that aims to remind our communities that Women are more than Just Mothers and Men are more than Just Fathers. It takes both a man and a woman to have a child” emphasized Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation and President of Merck More Than a Mother.

Films can also deliver messages to encourage Men to speak openly about their infertility,



First Lady of Ghana, H.E. Rebecca Akufo-Addo; CEO of Merck Foundation and President Merck More Than a Mother, Dr. Rasha Kelej meet National TV & Film Institution to launch Film Awards to deliver messages to break infertility stigma

because 50% of infertility cases are due to Male factor, Men too can be infertile, but they only blame women for the inability to have children. Through the films, we hope to create a Cultural Shift aiming to educate our communities that “Fertility is a Shared Responsibility” hence men should support their wives and join them during the treatment journey.

“Filmmakers, it’s time to showcase your talent and contribute towards making a difference in society with your unique films with strong and relevant messages about infertility.” Dr. Rasha Kelej added.

The best three Films will be selected by ‘Merck More Than a Mother’ committee. Winners will be granted US\$ 1000 each and will be celebrated during the Merck Africa Asia Luminary which will be conducted in Ghana on the 29th and 30th of October in presence of more than 15 African First Ladies and 1000 participants from more than 60 countries.

Merck Foundation plans to scale up this initiative in many more African Countries.

Merck Foundation has been empowering many infertile women in Ghana by building a productive life for them by setting up businesses of their choice for them, as women are much more than just mothers.

Merck Foundation has also provided technical training to four candidates from Ghana under their ‘Merck Africa Embryology Training Program’ to help build capacity in the



Merck More than a Mother' Film Awards



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation with First Lady of Ghana, H.E. Rebecca Akufo-Addo

field of infertility in the country. The program will be scaled up under the umbrella of the long term partnership with the First Lady of Ghana.

Who can apply?

Students from NAFTI, Ghana

Last date of submission:

Entries can be submitted till 30th June 2019.

How to apply?

Entries can be submitted via email to info@merck-foundation.com.

Subject line of the mail should mention: Merck Foundation Film Awards

Do also mention your name, contact number and email id.

About 'Merck More Than a Mother' campaign;

"Merck More Than a Mother" initiative aims to empower infertile women through access to information, education and health and by changing mind-sets. This powerful initiative supports governments in defining policies to enhance access to regulated, safe and effective fertility care. It defines interventions to break the stigma around infertile women and raises awareness about infertility prevention and management. In partnership with academia, ministries of health and international fertility societies, the initiative also provides medical education and training for healthcare providers and embryologists to build and advance fertility care capacity in Africa and developing countries.

With "Merck More than a mother", we have initiated a cultural shift to de-stigmatize infertility on all levels: By improving awareness, training the skills of local experts, building advocacy in cooperation with decision makers and by supporting childless women in starting their own small business. It's all about giving every woman the respect and the help she deserves to live a fulfilling life, with or without a child.

The Ambassadors of "Merck More Than a Mother" are: First Lady of Ghana, H.E. REBECCA AKUFO-ADDO; H.E. NEO JANE MASISI, The First Lady of Botswana; H.E. DENISE NKURUNZIZA, The First Lady of the Republic of Burundi; H.E. BRIGITTE TOUADERA, The First Lady of Central Africa Republic; H.E. HINDA DEBY ITNO, The First Lady of Chad; H.E. DJÈNÈ CONDÈ, The First Lady of Guinea-Conakry; H.E. FATOUMATTA BAH BARROW, The First Lady of Gambia; H.E. AISSATA ISSOUFOU MAHAMADOU, The First Lady of Niger; H.E. FATIMA MAADA BIO, The First Lady of Sierra Leone and H.E. ESTHER LUNGU, The First Lady of Zambia.

Also, part of the campaign is our Merck Embryology & Fertility Training Program, a three-month hands-on practical course in partnership with IRSI, Indonesia, IIRRH, India and Manipal Academy of Higher Education (Manipal University), India to establish the platform of fertility specialists

across Africa and developing countries. Merck Foundation provided for more than 84 candidates, in clinical and practical training for fertility specialists and embryologists in more than 29 countries across Africa and Asia such as: Chad, Niger, Central African Republic, Cote D'Ivoire , Ghana, Ethiopia , Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania , Zambia , Nigeria, Benin, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cameroon, Rwanda, Botswana, DR Congo , Congo Brazzaville, Gambia , Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Cambodia.

Merck Foundation is making history in many African countries where they never had fertility specialists or specialized fertility clinics before 'Merck More Than a Mother' intervention, to train the first fertility specialists such as; in Sierra Leone, Liberia, The Gambia, Niger, Chad, Guinea, Ethiopia and Uganda.

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