

**TRAINING HEALTH RESEARCHERS INTO VOCATIONAL
EXCELLENCE IN EAST AFRICA (THRiVE)**



COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

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1.0 Preamble

Makerere University College of Health Sciences is the lead institution in the THRiVE consortium and hosts the THRiVE secretariat. The university has a communications policy which was approved in March 2013 but may be revised over time. THRiVE is bound to follow the University communications policy that may be in force at any particular time. However, there is need to provide for the peculiarities of THRiVE as a consortium which are not catered in the above policy document. That is what is addressed in this THRiVE Communication Strategy.

2.0 THRiVE (Training Health Researchers in Vocational Excellence)

THRiVE-2 brings together 8 institutions (5 universities and 3 research Institutes), 6 in East Africa (EA) and 2 in UK, with the aim of building capacity in East Africa for health sciences research. THRiVE-2 will harness synergies to groom and mentor the most promising young scientists to become independent, internationally-recognized research leaders doing cutting edge research that addresses EA's priority health problems.

3.0 Purpose of this policy

The THRiVE Communication strategy will be used by THRiVE partner institutions to provide guidance for external and internal communication. It will keep partners informed of what is happening, respond to their concerns and also involve them in the implementation of program activities. Our communication strategy will be a two-way process with free communication between partners and the secretariat.

THRiVE will place great emphasis on regular communication through, for example, e-mail, electronic discussion groups, website content and updates, face to face meetings, conference calls, conferences and newsletters. Regular communication will contribute to ensuring that we remain together as a network

We will communicate through the various telephones, emails, and where necessary postal and door-to-door delivery services. Communication through THRiVE committees which have representation from all partner institutions (for example Steering, Career Development award, PhD and Postdoctoral Training, Finance and Public engagement) will also be utilised. The quarterly newsletter and THRiVE website are other avenues through which we communicate with each partner institution.

Social Media:

We will use social media platforms. In both internal and external communications, social media should be used appropriately while ensuring that institutional, national and international guidelines and regulations are adhered to.

This policy seeks to provide guidelines for the timely, effective and appropriate flow of information within and between THRiVE partner institutions. The aim is to assist

THRiVE faculty, staff and students in fulfilling the educational, research, and community-outreach goals of the Consortium.

4.0 Objectives of the communications strategy

- a. To streamline the flow of information within the consortium in order to enhance educational, research and innovations, information sharing and networking activities between faculty, students and staff.
- b. To provide guidance for effective and responsible electronic, print and verbal communication.
- c. To provide updates on activities being implemented at partner institutions.

5.0 Vision of this policy

To provide a pro-active approach to information management and dissemination, strengthen the image of the consortium and build good will among the stakeholders.

6.0 Policy Audiences

The strategy will target the co-applicants, supervisors, faculty, PhD, Postdoctoral, masters, interns as well as career development awardees. The respective partner institutions, public, policy makers, potential funders may also be and target audiences.

7.0 Principles of Communication pertaining to this Policy

- a. All communication shall be delivered in a regular and timely manner.
- b. Information from the THRiVE Secretariat and partners should be simple and clear without any ambiguities that could lead to misinterpretation.
- c. The policy shall seek to meet the information needs of THRiVE faculty, students, staff, and our stakeholders.

8.0 Internal communication roles and responsibilities

- a. The Director THRiVE shall communicate the official decisions of the Consortium.
- b. The Chairpersons of THRiVE Committees shall communicate the official decisions of the respective committees.
- c. The Chairperson of the Advisory Board shall communicate the decisions of the THRiVE Advisory Board.
- d. Co-Applicants of THRiVE partner institutions shall be responsible for communicating issues within their jurisdiction.

9.0 Electronic Communication

- a. THRiVE recognizes electronic communication (like email and websites) as an official mode of communication and information sharing.
- b. All faculty and students are encouraged to regularly check the THRiVE websites and their email addresses to receive official communication from the Consortium.

- c. Faculty and students shall refrain from using insulting language in the email subject or accompanying text.

10.0 Visitor and Guest Relations

THRiVE faculty, staff and students are encouraged at all times to be courteous to visitors and guests.

11.0 External communication

All intended external communication whether in the news media, newsletters, scientific publications, online, presentations at national, regional or international workshops and conferences and all research related information should be reviewed critically for accuracy prior to sharing the content outside the partner institution(s). In these communications THRiVE/DELTAS and any other funder that may have contributed to the work being referred to should be acknowledged. However, there should always be a disclaimer that the ideas and views expressed in the presentation or publication are those of the authors and not necessarily of the funders and/or their institutions. Open access publications are encouraged and should be considered as much as possible. Dissemination or sharing of innovations, experiences, lessons learned from THRiVE work should be the norm but without jeopardizing chances for intellectual property protection especially with new discoveries.

12.0 Implementation of the Policy

The adequacy of this policy will be judged as implementation takes place. The Director THRiVE shall in consultation with the Steering Committee initiate revisions to this policy when necessary. The policy will be implemented as an addendum to Makerere University communications policy or that of a partner institution where THRiVE work takes place.

13.0 Compliance with the policy

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action under the THRiVE Human Resources Manual.

14.0 Review

THRiVE Secretariat will review the policy every five years of implementation, and forward the outcome of the review process to the THRiVE Steering Committee for approval.



14th August

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Chairman, THRiVE Steering Committee

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Date