LENS IN MATHARE:

BUILDING COMMUNITY FILMMAKING CAPACITY WITH YOUTH IN KENYA'S URBAN MARGINS



Spend six weeks in Nairobi working alongside young people in Mathare to develop their documentary filmmaking skills. As one of three Laidlaw scholars, you'll help local teams plan, film, edit and share short documentaries about stories they want to tell.

Working alongside Maji Mazuri Kenya, you'll help build a community-led filmmaking programme that gives young people the skills and confidence to tell their own stories.

AT A GLANCE

Six-weeks pioneering a filmmaking training programme for young adults in Mathare, Kenya

ORGANISATION
Maji Mazuri Kenya

WHERE
Mathare Valley, Nairobi, Kenya

WHEN
Mid/late May - Early/mid July

YOUR ROLE
To train and mentor young filmmakers

PLACES
Three recruited scholars

YOUR LEAD
Niall Houlihan, 2025 scholar

Register Your Interest by Friday 11th December 2026

Fill in the Expression of Interest form and keep your programme manager in the loop.
Scan the QR code or go to:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf39g71bOr-n5qCAlKGjB2Pixtwg_BbsHTQhpirYNA3muTaSg/viewform?usp=header

A BIT MORE ABOUT THE WORK

The Lens in Mathare project is the second iteration of a filmmaking training programme run alongside Maji Mazuri Kenya. It aims to build capacity for and interest in documentary filmmaking among youth (18-30) in Mathare Valley, one of Kenya's most densely populated and under-resourced urban settlements.

YOUR ROLE

Each scholar will work with two teams of three young people aged 18–30 from Mathare. Each team will develop its own 2–3 minute documentary, with participants receiving a stipend to compensate for time spent on the programme.



PLAN

Help young filmmakers develop their documentary ideas, plan their stories and prepare for filming.



SHOOT

Guide participants through camera operation, interviewing, composition and documentary storytelling.



EDIT

Support participants in reviewing footage, editing their films and developing their final documentaries.



SHARE

Help participants promote their work and organise an end-of-programme film launch.

WHY THIS WORK MATTERS

Young people in Mathare have stories worth telling, but often lack the resources and opportunities to share them. Lens in Mathare aims to change this by giving local young people practical filmmaking skills and the opportunity to tell stories from their own communities.

Working alongside Maji Mazuri Kenya, we are developing a community-led model of documentary filmmaking that could eventually be expanded to other communities. The programme is designed not only to produce films, but to build lasting skills, confidence and opportunities for young filmmakers.

OPPORTUNITIES BEYOND FILMMAKING

Alongside the core filmmaking programme, there may be opportunities to contribute to other areas of Maji Mazuri's work, depending on your interests and the needs of the organisation.

This could be one of the following, or something else entirely.

- **Media and communications:** Creating promotional photography, video or other content for Maji Mazuri.
- **Programme development:** Helping develop a social media strategy and raising awareness of Lens in Mathare.
- **Community engagement:** Getting involved in educational activities or football coaching with Maji Mazuri's Headstart programme.

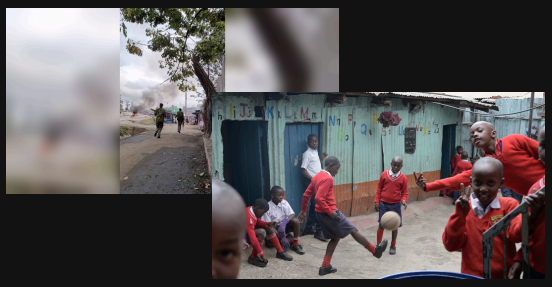
YOU'RE A GREAT FIT IF:

- **You have some filmmaking experience**: You don't have to be Steven Spielberg, a strong grasp of the basics is enough to teach beginners.
- **You are excited by the thought of building something new**: This is just the second iteration of this programme, so your input will have a real impact on how it develops.
- **You are ready to push yourself in a tough environment**: There will be lots of support mechanisms in place, but Mathare is an undeniably intense working environment. You need to be ready to put yourself out of your comfort zone, but also be honest with yourself if you need a break.
- **You are open to learning, not just teaching:** Yes, you will be teaching filmmaking, but you will be learning everything else - how to operate in an unfamiliar culture - interacting with people, ordering food, moving around the city and seeing Mathare without preconceptions.

A GLANCE AT LAST YEAR'S WORK



Child Exposure to Political Violence
Vincent Hungi
Victor Ryan
Sharon Kaveke
Maxwell Njenga
Telvis Karanu
Simon Maina
Collins Kissinger







Environmental Conservation in Mathare
Slavisa Oucho
Jared James
Millicent Malesi
Welvin Were
Martha Gwahala
Eric Otieno
Nathan Kirui
Tony Wambua



Fill the Plates
MuSir
Hii_Kaya
Enock Kirimi
Arnold Mwangi
Fidel Ochieng
Rickens Owino

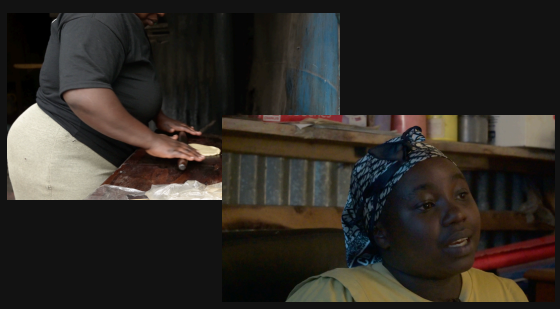






The Weight We Never Saw
David Apiya
David Ochieng
Vivian Alouch





Unemployed in Ghetto Hood
Prudence Njambi
Samson Syomera
Henry Mbugua
Simon Macharia



PROJECT TIMELINE, COSTS AND NEXT STEPS



Week Zero (Half Week)
Arrive in Nairobi
Meet teams
Settle in

Week One
Brainstorming
Planning
Initial shot lists

Week Two
Begin filming
Interviews
B-roll
Evaluate content

Week Three
Shooting
Backing-up
Reviewing
More shooting

Week Four
Final shots
Editing
Editing
Editing

Week Five
Final edits
Exporting
Promotion plan

Week six (Half Week)
Celebration event
Film launch
Feedback questionnaires.

A TYPICAL WEEK

- **Monday to Thursday:** Filmmaking workshops, shooting and editing with your two participant teams
- **Friday:** Individual projects, programme development or administrative work
- **Saturday and Sunday:** Free time and opportunities to explore Nairobi and the surrounding area

ESTIMATED COST BREAKDOWN

PROGRAMME CONTRIBUTION	£400 / $530
Participant stipends; end of programme celebration; additional camera hire; electricity/fuel	
ACCOMODATION	£650-£850 / $850-$1,100
Six-weeks in a comfortable, serviced apartment in Kilimani	
FOOD	£400 / $530
A comfortable mix of eating out in local restaurants and cooking at home	
TRANSPORT	£50 / $65
Costs to and from Mathare, assuming shared uber each morning and evening	
Total	**£1,500-£1,700 / $2,000 - $2,250**

NEXT STEPS

1. Complete the Expression of Interest Form by **Friday 11th Dec**
2. Get in touch with your programme manager and tell them you are interested in this opportunity.
3. Fill out the application form, as soon as it is shared.

FAQs

Can I arrive late or leave early?
No. You need to complete a full six-week LiA.

Are the lead and the foundation approving my LiA?
No. Your own university and programme manager apply their independent LiA protocol.

Will the lead arrange my visa, accommodation, flights or insurance?
No. The lead will help with any questions about visas, flights and insurance, but it will be up to the individual scholar to organise. The lead will coordinate scholars in booking a shared four-bedroom apartment.

Who do I contact if I have a concern about the lead?
Your own programme manager.

What if dates, work or costs change?
Explain changes promptly, consult the partner and relevant programme managers, and confirm material decisions in writing.

Anything Else
Don't hesitate to contact me, nh201@st-andrews.ac.uk

Expression of Interest Form