



# ACCER Awards

Rewarding & Sustaining Excellence in Environmental Journalism

# 2022



Sweden  
Sverige



@PACJA1  
#COP27AfricanVoice  
#AccerAwards2022



# INTRODUCTION

Climate justice remains the 'real big story' of the mass and social media today, despite the climate change being a ubiquitous story for the journalists. The need for the Civil society organisations (CSOs) to step up and demonstrate the understanding of the concept of what climate justice is on one hand and the need for the information merchants to equally comprehend from day to day activities of the populace and people they interact with, digest, and disseminate the same concepts in ways that the masses could appreciate the reasons why their fields are no longer producing optimally, why they suffer famine and drought that leaves their livestock and livelihood destroyed or why their women and girl-child can't find water in their local rivers cannot be gainsaid.

Thankfully, reporters have not failed in rising up to their responsibility of connecting the consequences of the rising emissions to daily lives of the African people. The sharing of climate crisis stories has remained a key function of the mass media, at least in the eyes of the Climate change advocates. As part of its effort to promote climate and environmental journalism, and enhance awareness on broader climate discourse and intervention measures in Africa, PACJA pioneered the African Climate Change and Environmental Reporting (ACCER) Awards in 2013 which has continued to build an enviable mass of journalists across Africa, thus elevating the subject of climate change in the continent's news platforms.

However, while Journalists have maintained the knowledge-action continuum between research, extension, and stakeholders and have continued to seek information on how the climate crisis impacts is affecting the African communities, this has tended to be largely within the confines of environment and scientific in nature. Since the first call for entries when the Award was initiated, Journalists have focussed submitting articles that capture the vulnerability of the African societies to climate impacts.

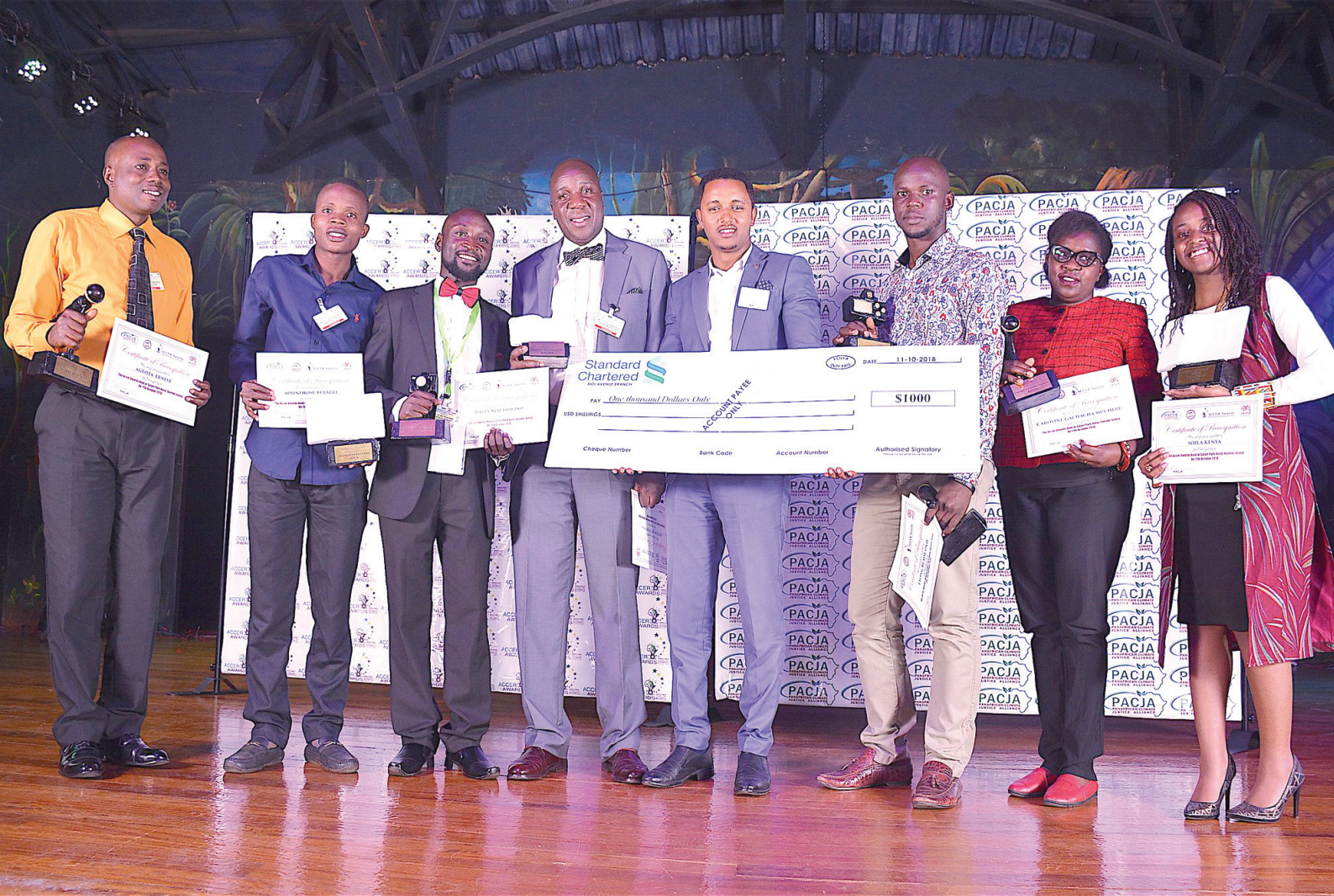
Nevertheless, a look at the geopolitics around climate justice and climate change reveals a deep need to realign our narratives to counter the numerous misinformation that have cropped up lately. First, there is talk that climate impacts affects all people and societies equally. This fact has led to Africa being denied its deserved consideration as "special needs and circumstances region" within the UNFCCC discussion processes. In addition, there are other emerging issues like the talk around NetZero, whose agenda is gobbling resources that could have otherwise been channelled to support Africa's Adaptation efforts.

The above two examples leave no doubt the need to refocus the way PACJA engages with the media. It is the time journalists were supported to shift their focus from the usual climate change-victim narratives to begin highlighting informed arguments about Africa's place at the UNFCCC discussion table. Thus, it is time journalists delved a little bit deeper to interact with experts in the area of climate informatics and analysts capable of providing forecasting and building scenarios as well as providing pathways for Africa when they engage with the rest of the world. This can be done without compromising the need to continue churning out information that showcase the resilience of the African people in the face of climate change impact.

<https://theconversation.com/why-climate-change-must-stay-on-the-news-agenda-beyond-global-summits-171845>







## OUTCOMES PURSUED

1. Enhanced capacity for climate justice reporting across Africa by journalists and climate activists in social media spaces
2. Greater visibility of Africans demands/ asks for COP 27 as a result of amplified reporting on climate justice issues linked to COP 27 in this year and beyond
3. Dialogue in COP 27 is shaped by African narratives of lived realities and experience of African communities experiencing climate change crisis as framed by the Mass and social Media coverage.

# OBJECTIVES





# ROLLING OUT THE 2022 ACCER AWARDS

- A. **ACCER Awards will take two major forms;** i. **The ACCER Awards** as has been traditionally done and ii. The Story grant, which is a new granting approach/ product which PACJA aims to introduce. **This section** is largely for the ACCER Award and there is a subsequent section devoted for story grant, in later section of this document.
- B. **General organisation of ACCER Awards:**  
The ACCER Awards 2022 will be organized in a manner that promotes capacity development for journalists and social media fraternity so as to promote heightened visibility of climate injustice issues affecting African people and amplifies proposal for solutions through well-articulated messaging. In order to achieve this, the process of ACCER Awards will be organized in three stages.
- Strengthening capacity of journalists and social media persons involved in environmental and climate change reporting with a bias to Adaptation financing, Loss and Damage Financing and State of Matters at Play in COP 27.
  - Rewarding journalists (Pan African and National)
  - Identifying local media/ vernacular radio and TV stations who have been undertaking impressive work reporting on climate change. This will focus on Kenya, Zambia and Ivory coast in addition to the AACJ project implementing countries
- C. **Institutional arrangements (Committee Steering The ACCER Awards Process)**  
For effective delivery of the Awards, a steering committee will be set up comprising of the head of policy, advocacy and communication, communication officials from the PACJA secretariat and the select team of experts from various partner organisations.

## D. Competition Theme threads



### 1. Resilience building:

Improving lives of women and young people (communities experiencing climate crisis) through Locally-led Climate Actions and initiatives in Africa. Faced with the climate change impacts, what are the coping mechanisms? How can these local initiatives helping them cope and or build their resilience? Can we demonstrate resilience of the African people and communities? How can they be emulated? What are the glaring gaps that make Africa most vulnerable in the case of a crisis different from climate emergency?



## 2. Climate innovations

In-depth reporting demonstrating how rural communities or individuals in parts of Africa are using smart innovations/ techniques to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change, while at the same time improving their livelihoods. How innovative solutions are being used to overcome environmental challenges. Innovative solutions can be in all sectors not limited to protection and conservation of forests, water and biodiversity.



## 3. Climate policy, governance & transparency:

Work that brings out the aspect of climate governance, policy development and implementation, or one that exposes corruption deals and cartels affecting climate change.



## 4. Climate finance:

Focus on finances channelled by national, regional and international entities for climate change mitigation and adaptation projects and programmes. The story may demonstrate how communities/companies/NGOs are accessing and/or using these finances, what the impact is in terms of climate adaptation and mitigation, and how this is impacting on livelihoods. Climate Finance negotiation reporting, including in a manner that enlightens and simplifies complex narratives into a ease read and easy understand.

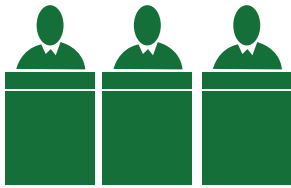


5. Proposals on how to make **Africa's participation in COP negotiations effective**. What is the nature of new and transformative proposals the Africa continent needs to bring on board COP27.

6. The world the young people want to see. What are some of the outstanding initiatives youths fighting climate change are involved in? Can we showcase their contributions to the climate debate?



## E. Terms for the Judges



A team of eminent panellists from across Africa and with different specialities in communication, climate change and media will be selected to judge submitted articles. Their main role will be to:

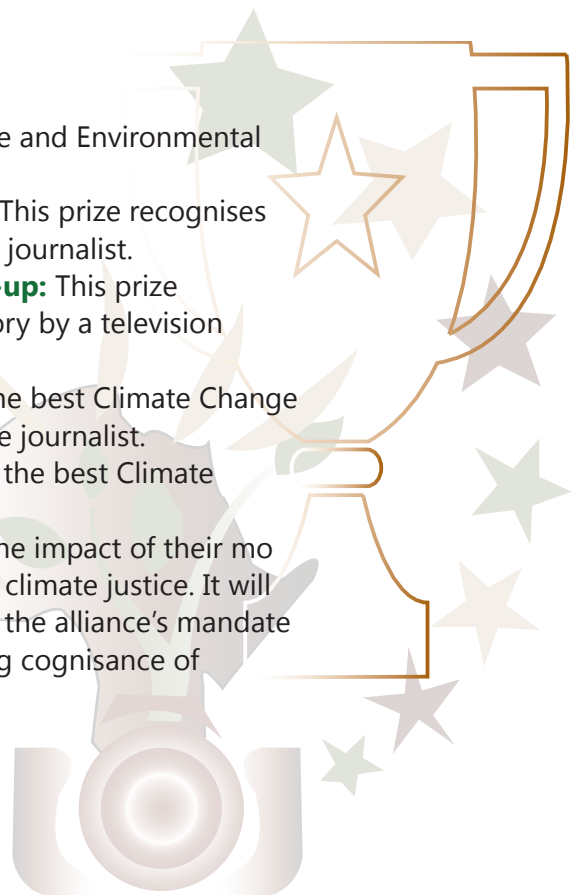
1. Carefully review the selection process, with a view to improving and/or developing clear parameters against which the various entries will be rated.
2. Consider, examine and rate the entries/nominations based on the agreed parameters. The rating will be based on extensive consultation among the judges in order to ensure consensus
3. Develop and present a report indicating the final decision with regard to the overall winners, winners in each category and runners-up
4. Prepare and submit a report to PACJA highlighting lessons learnt, areas of improvement for future awards and possible opportunities to be considered for the awards, among other issues
5. Carry out any other duty that may be agreed upon with PACJA

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## E. AWARD CATEGORIES

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1. **ACCER Grand Prize:** Recognises the best Climate Change and Environmental story across all platforms.
2. **ACCER Radio Journalism Award and two runners-up:** This prize recognises the best Climate Change and Environment story by radio journalist.
3. **ACCER Television Journalism Award and two runners-up:** This prize recognises the best Climate Change and Environment story by a television journalist
4. **ACCER Print Journalism Award:** This prize recognises the best Climate Change and Environment story by a newspaper or news magazine journalist.
5. **ACCER Online Journalism Award:** This prize recognises the best Climate Change and Environment story by an online journalist.
6. **Young Digital Activists Award:** This award will look at the impact of their mobilization abilities to engage with the youth in matters of climate justice. It will be looking for individuals who have managed to capture the alliance's mandate their content on the various social media platforms taking cognisance of creativity and innovativeness





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## F. ELIGIBILITY

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- a. The competition is open to all journalists from Africa and who are from established media houses, private or public-sector media. Freelance journalists and bloggers are also eligible.
- b. The competition is also open to young digital activists from across Africa who are involved in climate activism online.

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## G. SUBMISSION

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**Print:** Share a link online or an original newspaper page containing the article title and author's name. Where the by-line of the writer does not appear on the story, an email will do.

Equally for, all active social media platforms that best represent one's work for the Young digital activists

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## H. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

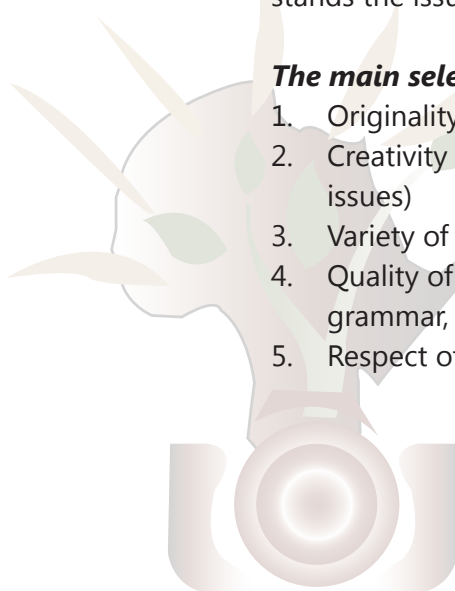
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### **Judging Criteria**

Judges will review entries and decide on the winners in the print/web-based, TV and radio and digital categories. The pieces should demonstrate that the author understands the issues outlined above.

### ***The main selection criteria for the pieces are:***

1. Originality, structure, and quality of writing/broadcast piece
2. Creativity and colour (use of relevant interviews and examples to illustrate the issues)
3. Variety of voices/quotes used
4. Quality of language (engaging writing/radio style, accurate spelling and grammar, etc.)
5. Respect of the prescribed format



***The following will be key:***

- Has the journalist identified the problem and outlined how communities are using interesting measurable ways to solve it?
- How has the scribe, through the submitted story, shown commitment to combating the climate crisis? What reaction has the story elicited?
- Has the story opened any eyes? Has the journalist created any awareness and helped change the manner in which communities, governments or other stakeholders view the climate crisis?
- Has the journalist captured the resilience of local community, its coping mechanism and its adaptation efforts?

***Important to note***

The Judges reserve the right to disqualify any entry if it does not meet the contest criteria and present regulations

1. By entering, participants warrant that their print/audio materials are original work and do not infringe on any third party's rights
2. Contest entry constitutes an agreement to allow PACJA to publicise contestants' names, occupations, countries, and to publish entries
3. Contest entry also constitutes an agreement to allow PACJA to use the material in its publications and in promotional activities. Applicants will retain ownership and all other rights to future use of their material
4. If for any reason the competition is not completed as planned, PACJA reserves the
5. right at its sole discretion to cancel, terminate, modify or suspend it
6. The decisions made by the panel of judges are final and beyond dispute
7. All participants in this competition implicitly accept the rules presented in this document

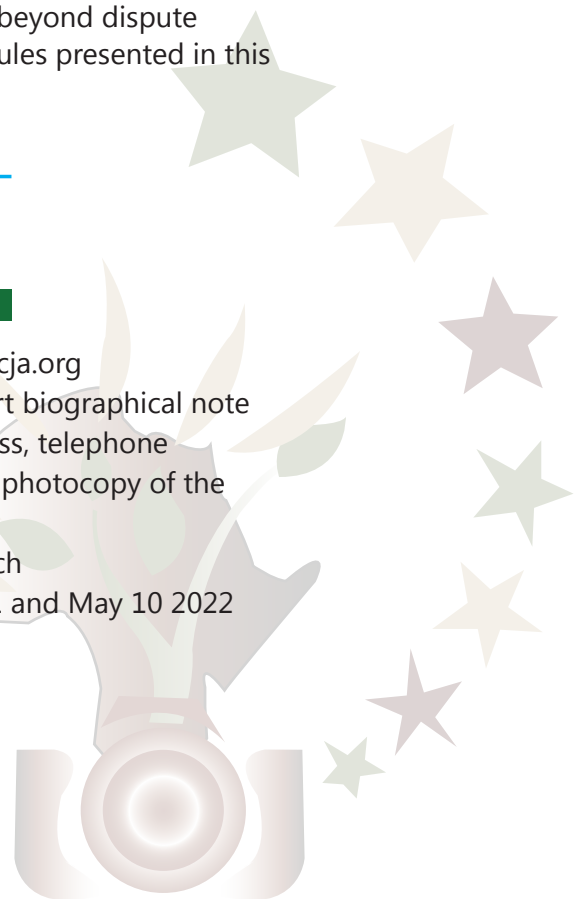
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## I. SUBMISSION

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1. Entries are to be submitted by email to [acceraawards@pacja.org](mailto:acceraawards@pacja.org)
2. All applicants must submit their entries along with a short biographical note with name and full contact details, including email address, telephone number(s), postal address, town, country, and a scanned photocopy of the author's identification card or passport in JPEG format.
3. Entries must be original pieces written in English or French
4. Articles must have been published between August 2021 and May 10 2022

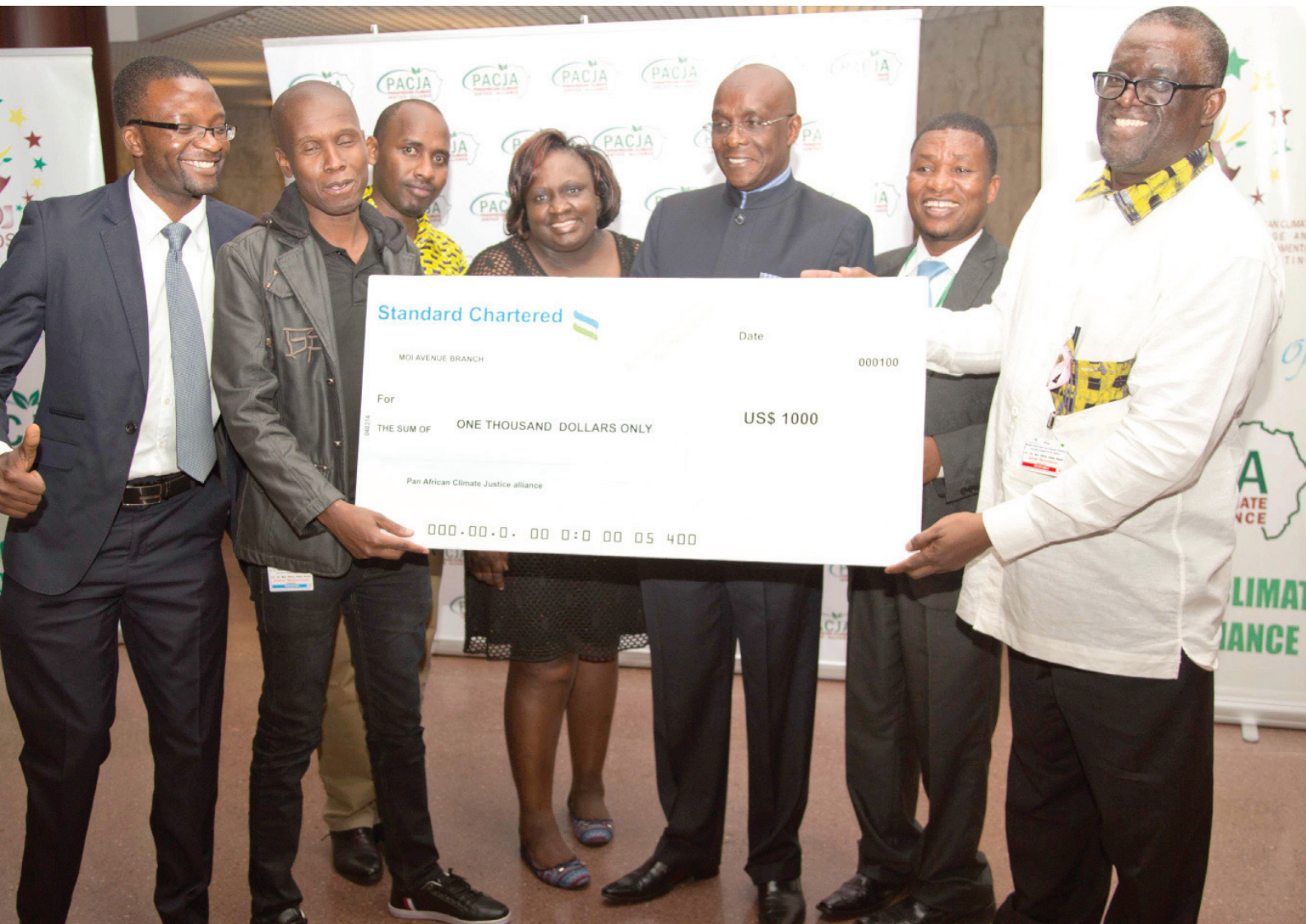
**- Note: A story can only be entered for one category.**





## J. DEADLINE

Submission of articles begins on April 14 – May 24, 2022. The deadline for receipt of submissions is May 24, 2022. Entries are to be submitted to [accerawards@pacja.org](mailto:accerawards@pacja.org). Entries received after deadline will not be considered.







# INTRODUCTION

To help build, maintain and drive the momentum towards the 27th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27), PACJA can tap into its established relationship with the media practitioners in print, on air (TV and radio) and online (Social media influencers) through quarterly calls for themed story grants that will on one hand motivate reporters to look for quality stories and on the other, use the stories to build Africa's case for positions both with our governments, the UNFCCC, and COP27 discussions. Such an approach if adopted, will give PACJA some benefits, obvious of which include;

- i. Help keep PACJA on the driver's seat ahead of COP27
- ii. Keep the vibrant media ecosystem alive and
- iii. Meaningfully engage community journalists and media practitioners on issues related to COP 27 and disinformation.
- iv. The story grants will allow for the media to keep conducting their public information mission, which is even more essential in the conduct of COP discussions

## Approach

- i. Decide the amount of grant each quarter and the amount allocation for each reporter
- ii. Decide core issues of concern from each of the four of Africa's regions in each quarter. These would also be areas we would be expecting story proposals to cover
- iii. Design call for story ideas
- iv. A panel go through proposals to check whose idea matches with what is needed in the quarter
- v. Offer the grant into two- one to support the journalist begin the work, the second after the article has been published by their own media house editors
- vi. The raw copy of the published article will then be sent to PACJA for our internal use in whatever format.

This, is a different approach to ACCER Awards, which tend to award journalists from work done mostly in the preceding year. However, given that COP27 will be held in Africa this year, and the need by PACJA to build a movement of Change ahead of the COP, PACJA can gain more mileage by going the story grants way.

This approach could therefore be adopted for only this year so that the journalists are kept busy writing and talking about COP27 thereby setting the public agenda which will in turn shape the narratives at COP27.

## Young Digital Activists

To help PACJA take conversations online, the Young Digital Activists will be part of the grant scheme. However, unlike the journalists, the YDAs will be funded monthly as national groups and not individually.

### The Approach

- i. Monthly and on rotational basis
- ii. A day is set aside when the entire YDAs in a country assemble in designated place or work remotely at agreed time for a period of say 2 hours
- iii. Core messages that resonate with their country-specific situations but tying in with Africa's position on COP27 are developed
- iv. YDAs disseminate the same to create conversation either on Facebook or Twitter
- v. The grant will facilitate their assembling as well as data bundles

Estimated cost per month per country YDAs = USD1000

### Story themes

1. **Resilience building:** Improving lives of women and young people (communities experiencing climate crisis) through Locally-led Climate Actions and initiatives in Africa. Faced with the climate change impacts, what are the coping mechanisms? How can these local initiatives helping them cope and or build their resilience? Can we demonstrate resilience of the African people and communities? How can they be emulated? What are the glaring gaps that make Africa most vulnerable in the case of a crisis different from climate emergency?
2. **Climate innovations:** In-depth reporting demonstrating how rural communities or individuals in parts of Africa are using smart innovations/ techniques to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change, while at the same time improving their livelihoods. How innovative solutions are being used to overcome environmental challenges. Innovative solutions can be in all sectors not limited to protection and conservation of forests, water and biodiversity.  
**Climate policy, governance & transparency:** Work that brings out the aspect of climate governance, policy development and implementation, or one that exposes corruption deals and cartels affecting climate change.
4. **Climate finance:** Focus on finances channelled by national, regional and international entities for climate change mitigation and adaptation projects and programmes. The story may demonstrate how communities/companies/NGOs are accessing and/or using these finances, what the impact is in terms of climate adaptation and mitigation, and how this is impacting on livelihoods. Climate Finance negotiation reporting, including in a manner that enlightens and simplifies complex narratives into a ease read and easy understand
5. Proposals on how to make Africa's participation in COP negotiations effective
6. **The world the young people want to see.** What are some of the outstanding initiatives youths fighting climate change are involved in? Can we showcase their contributions to the climate debate? PACJA values citizen participation and empowerment and do champion accountability and solutions journalism as well as investigative and enterprise reporting.



## Eligibility

Applications will be open to African journalists and content creators (print, visual, broadcast, online, and multimedia) with demonstrable background and experience in reporting news and public interest issues.

Will encourage pitches from freelancers and staff from all types of media organizations — international, national, local — especially those with particular interest in storytelling that tackle underreported narratives and are relevant to vulnerable and marginalized communities. Should accept both individual and group applications from early-career and senior journalists and content creators.

## Story approach and format

Should award 8-12 grants every quarter with the average amount being USD 1000.

Applicants should provide a detailed budget with justification for the amount requested using PACJA template to be developed.

The budgets should be reasonable and account for costs necessary for reporting without being extraneous. Shall expect that stories will be published or produced with equipment the applicant already has access to (including cameras, drones, lighting, tripods, etc.) and will not consider budgets that heavily focus on purchasing new supplies.

Stories can be published or produced in any major languages spoken in Africa mainly, Portuguese, English, French, Arabic. Please note no cost for translation in the budget.

## Judging criteria

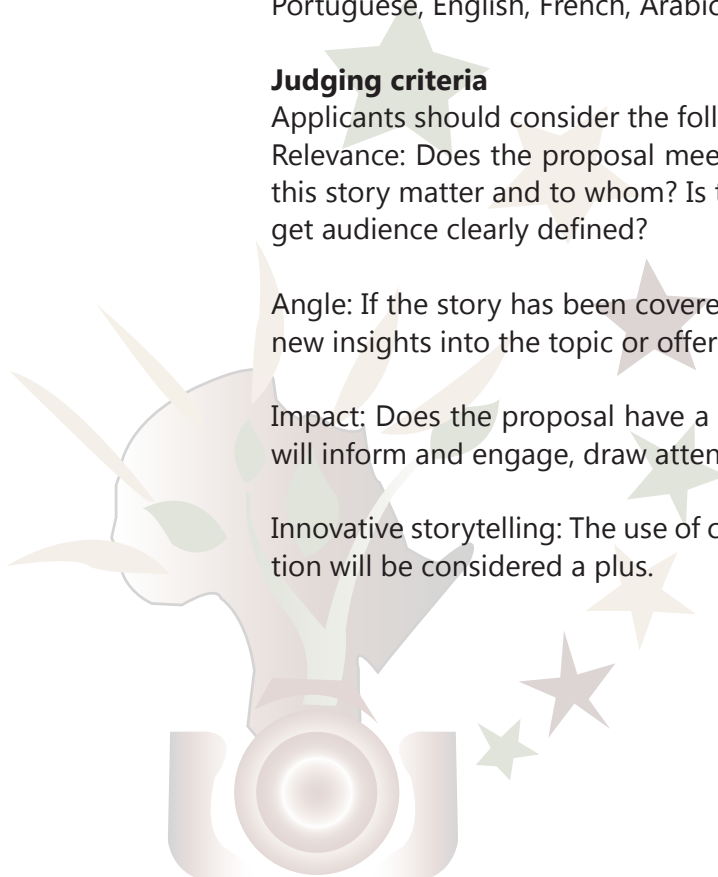
Applicants should consider the following points for their story pitches:

**Relevance:** Does the proposal meet the criteria and objectives of the call? Why does this story matter and to whom? Is the main idea, context and overall value to the target audience clearly defined?

**Angle:** If the story has been covered by mainstream media, does your proposal bring new insights into the topic or offer a fresh angle?

**Impact:** Does the proposal have a compelling narrative or investigative element that will inform and engage, draw attention, trigger debate, and urge action?

**Innovative storytelling:** The use of creative approaches, multimedia and data visualization will be considered a plus.



## Application process

Applications must be written in English and include the following:

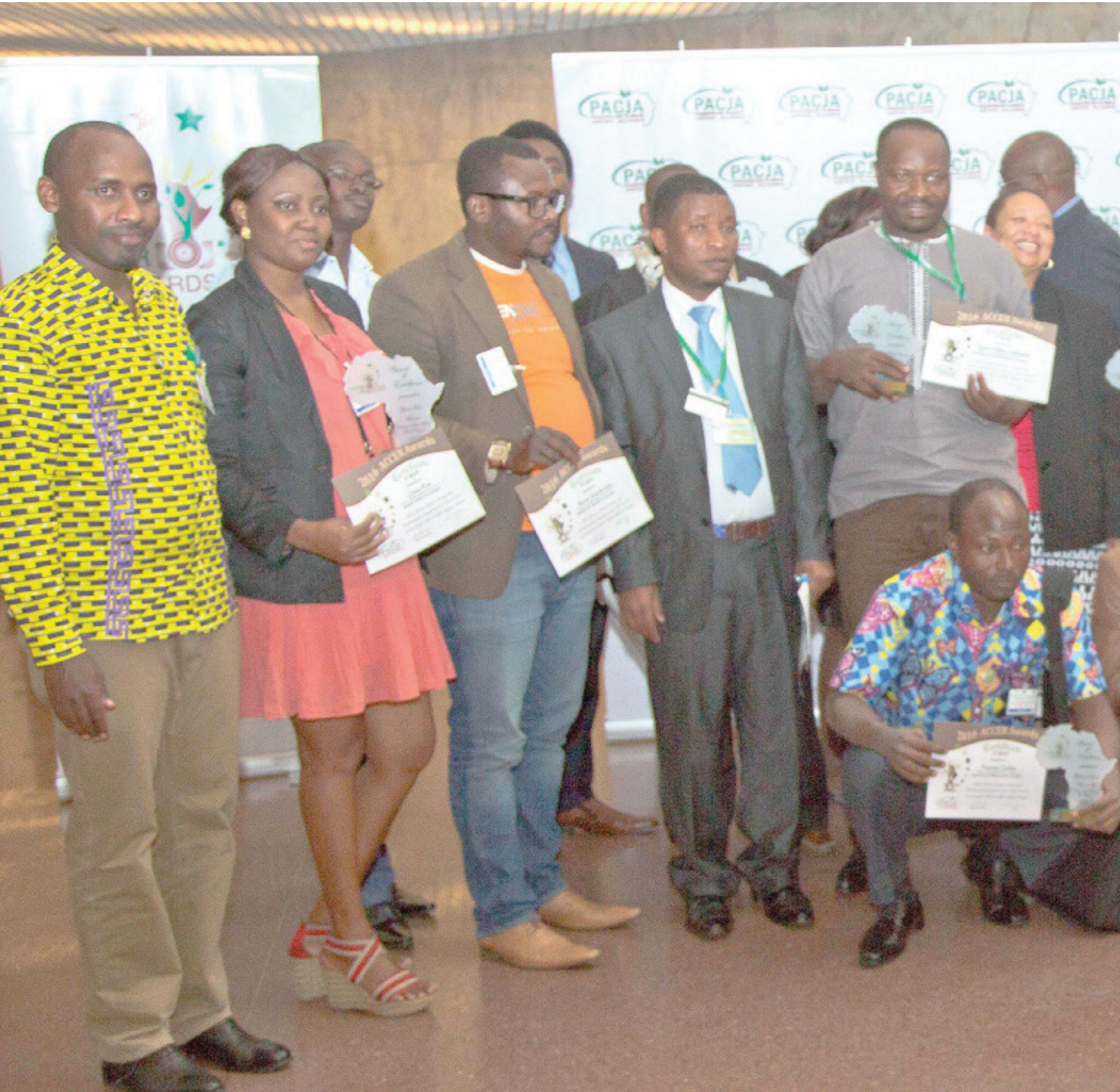
- A story pitch explained in no more than 500 words.
- A budget estimate, including a basic breakdown of costs.
- A compelling distribution plan, which includes letter(s) of interest from editor(s), publisher(s), or producer(s) as well as a report on the reach and analytics of the story published or produced.
- Three samples of stories or links to relevant work.
- A copy of your curriculum vitae and contact information (name, email, mobile number).

Send all the requirements to \_\_\_\_\_ email will be provided and deadlines for every quarter. Applicants selected for the story grants will receive notification via email.





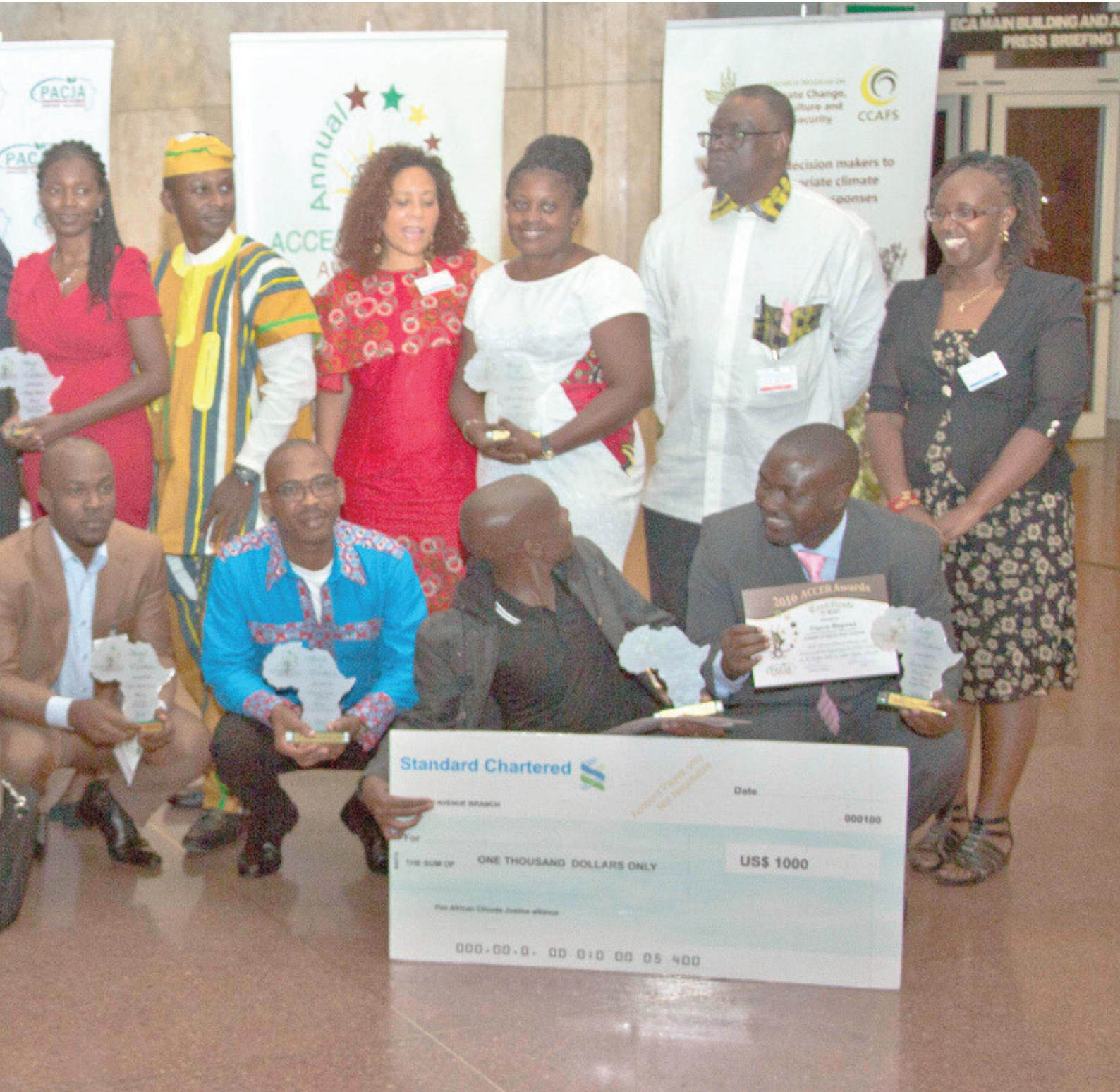


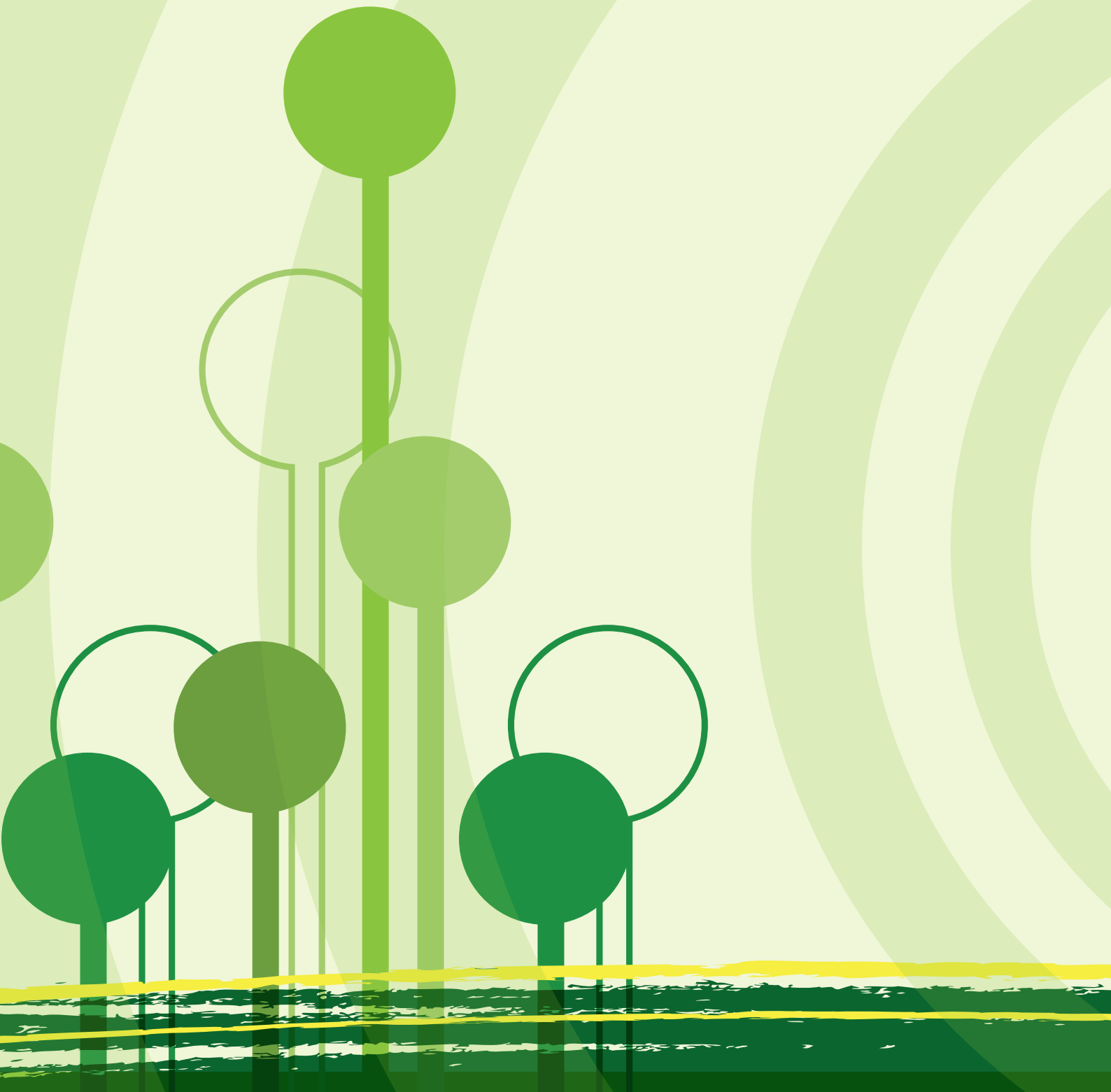


Feted Journalists









**PAN AFRICAN CLIMATE JUSTICE ALLIANCE (PACJA)**

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