

Editorial

Reflections on the Clean Air Journal Mentorship Programme

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"Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young."

Henry Ford, the father of the modern automobile

I served as an Associate Editor of the Clean Air Journal (CAJ) from the beginning of 2023 until the end of December 2024. From working on the NACA conference floor passing around the roving microphone to becoming Associate Editor of the CAJ, the journey has been worth it. Upon seeing the CAJ mentorship programme advertisement, I knew I had to take the leap of faith and apply for it in 2022. What a journey it has been. Henry Ford's quote about continuous learning is the theme for my mentorship programme; it is through wanting to continually learn that I joined the CAJ editors' team.

My tasks as an Associate Editor ranged from identifying suitable experts to review manuscripts, to assessing the fairness of the reviews, proofreading manuscripts, ensuring that a manuscript goes to production with no scientific errors, promoting policies and working on the CAJ portal. Indeed, I have learnt a lot.

I am so grateful to the Editors-in-Chief of the Clean Air Journal who welcomed me with warm hands to the team and were always willing to help when needed. During the mentorship programme I learnt the following:

- Time management is of the essence. Deadlines need to be met as only two volumes can be released per year, mid-year and at the end of the year.
- Working in a team, managing stakeholders and constant communication are essential. For example, I had to communicate to authors if there were delays with the reviews and providing guidance to novice authors.
- I developed my leadership skills through developing the CAJ's Language Policy which I presented at the 2023 NACA conference. I also presented the CAJ Annual Report at the 2024 NACA conference.

I am forever grateful to have been under the guidance of esteemed experts like Professors Kristy Langerman, Rebecca

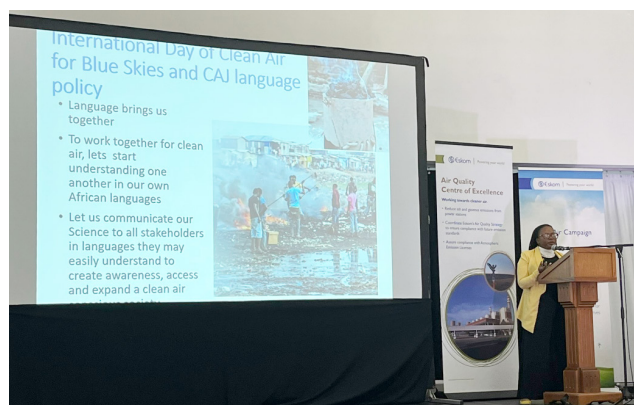


Figure 1: Presenting the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies and the CAJ Language Policy at the NACA conference in 2023

Garland and Dr Gregor Feig. Although my term as Associate Editor comes to an end, they forever remain my mentors. I would like to thank them very much for the opportunity.

Dr Mbalenhle Mpanza
Associate Editor 2023-2024