

UoN and Hitachi in a Kshs. 4M collaborative research agreement

The University of Nairobi (UoN) and Hitachi Limited, Japan, have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) of a grant amounting to Kshs. 4 million that will see the two collaborate in the area of capacity building and discovery science in infectious diseases.

As per the terms of agreement, UoN and Hitachi will conduct joint research on ethno-pharmacology of malaria and other infectious diseases. The research will seek to identify potential drug targets against malaria parasite using herbs commonly used by local herbalists to treat malaria. In addition, there will be a one year fellowship at Hitachi by UoN student, potential for investment in research promoting activities and infrastructure and create an avenue for joint application and access to international research funds.

The MoU was signed by the UoN, Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi and the General Manager, Centre for Exploratory Research, Hitachi, Dr. Shinji Yamada on September 12, 2017.

According to Dr. Yamada, the initial contact between UoN and Hitachi began when the Hitachi delegation visited College of Health Sciences (CHS) in 2015. During the visit, Dr. Julius Oyugi the then acting Chairman of the Department of Medical Microbiology gave a tour of the research facilities and shared his research interest.

“We were impressed by the on-going research activities at the College and felt the need to partner with UoN as one of our focus business domains is public healthcare,” said Dr. Yamada.

Prof. Mbithi thanked Hitachi for considering the proposal from the University and for the award of the grant. The Vice-chancellor said that UoN is strong in the area of health sciences and that the collaboration with Hitachi will improve on the quality, learning and research outputs.

“Our desire is to work together to get solutions that are global but can also address our local problems,” he said. “The University management is committed to ensuring that the tenets of this agreement are implemented.”

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Production and Extension, Prof. Lucy Irungu, ag. Principal, CHS, Prof. Frederick Were, Chairman, Department of Medical Microbiology, Prof Walter Jaoko, Dr. Julius Oyugi, CHS, Director, Centre for International Programmes and Linkages, are among those who witnessed the signing of the MoU.