

InquireFirst Final Report
WCSJ2019
Lausanne, Switzerland

InquireFirst collaborated with Mexico City-based Fundación Ealy Ortiz to conduct the 16th annual Latin American edition of the Jack F. Ealy Science Journalism Workshop during the World Conference of Science Journalists (WCSJ2019) in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Some 44 journalists from Latin America, Europe and the United States attended our workshop, a full-day interactive program which was held on July 1 before the WCSJ2019 inaugural ceremony.

The countries represented by journalists attending the workshop were:

- Mexico
- El Salvador
- Costa Rica
- Venezuela
- Colombia
- Brazil
- Argentina
- Bolivia
- Paraguay
- Uruguay
- Peru
- Chile
- Spain
- Italy
- UK
- United States

Fundación Ealy Ortiz sponsored 12 journalists to attend the Ealy workshop and WCSJ2019. In addition, InquireFirst sponsored the participation of two Mexican environmental journalists.

By way of background, InquireFirst is a San Diego, Calif.-based nonprofit journalism organization founded in January 2016 to provide professional training programs for Latin American science, health and environmental journalists as well as programs for investigative reporters. Our programs are conducted entirely in Spanish.

Over the past 3+ years, InquireFirst has organized and directed numerous science, health and environment workshops for Latin American journalists, both in Latin America (Costa Rica and Mexico) and in the U.S., including during the WCSJ2017 in San Francisco and at Stanford University in 2018.

We're pleased to announce that during our WCSJ2019 workshop, InquireFirst awarded our first-ever reporting grants to a team of Latin American science writers to support their work on a cross-border regional health story.

The science writers were chosen by judges who organized and evaluated two-minute lightening rounds of story pitches by 11 groups of journalists attending the workshop. The judges said the winning proposal was timely, relevant and focused on an underreported health issue in Latin America.

InquireFirst received support for the reporting grants from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The project will be published in *Tangible* (<https://bit.ly/2Owojqu>), an online science magazine based in Mexico, as well as the online edition of *El Universal*, the largest daily newspaper in Mexico. Our projected publication date is October 2019.

Reporting on the project will be conducted in South America, Central America and Mexico. The journalists on the team are:

- Margaret López, a science and economic reporter based in Venezuela who is the editor of HispanoPost Media Group and a collaborator with SciDev.net.
- Valeria Román, a freelance science writer based in Argentina who writes about science, health and the environment for *Science*, *Nature* and *Scientific American*, as well as Infobae.com, SciDev.net and *Forbes Argentina*.
- Debbie Ponchner, a science journalist with more than 15 years of experience in print and digital media, as well as newsroom management. Debbie is based in her home country of Costa Rica where she leads DP Comunicación Estratégica, a company devoted to improving the communication of science.
- Iván Carrillo, editor of *Tangible*, will serve as editor of the cross-border health project. Iván is the anchor of the program Los Observadores on Mexico's TV Azteca and a writer for *National Geographic* and *Newsweek en Español*. He has also worked with Discovery Channel and CNN en Español.

During our workshop at WCSJ2019, we had two interactive sessions on narrative science writing and shaping cross-border science stories – from idea to reality. We also had a panel discussion on new economic models for online science journalism sites as well as a dynamic exchange on building a regional network of science journalists.

Our speakers were:

- Deborah Blum, director of the Knight Science Journalism Program at MIT (U.S.)
- Iván Carrillo, editor of *Tangible* (Mexico)
- Thiago Medaglia, founder of *Ambiental* (Brazil)
- Diego Arguedas Ortiz, founder of *Ojo al Clima* (Costa Rica)
- Daniela Hirschfeld, Latin American correspondent with *SciDev.net* (Uruguay)
- André Biernath, reporter with *Saúde E Vital* (Brazil)

- Aleida Rueda, freelance science writer (Mexico)
- Lynne Friedmann, former editor of [ScienceWriters](#) (U.S.)
- Rosalind Reid, executive director of the Council for the Advancement of Science Writing (U.S.)
- Carlos Cienfuegos, director of the Faculty of Communication at Universidad Anáhuac (Mexico)
- Germán Fajardo, M.D., president of the Latin American Association of Faculties and Schools of Medicine (Mexico)
- S. Lynne Walker, executive director of InquireFirst (U.S.)