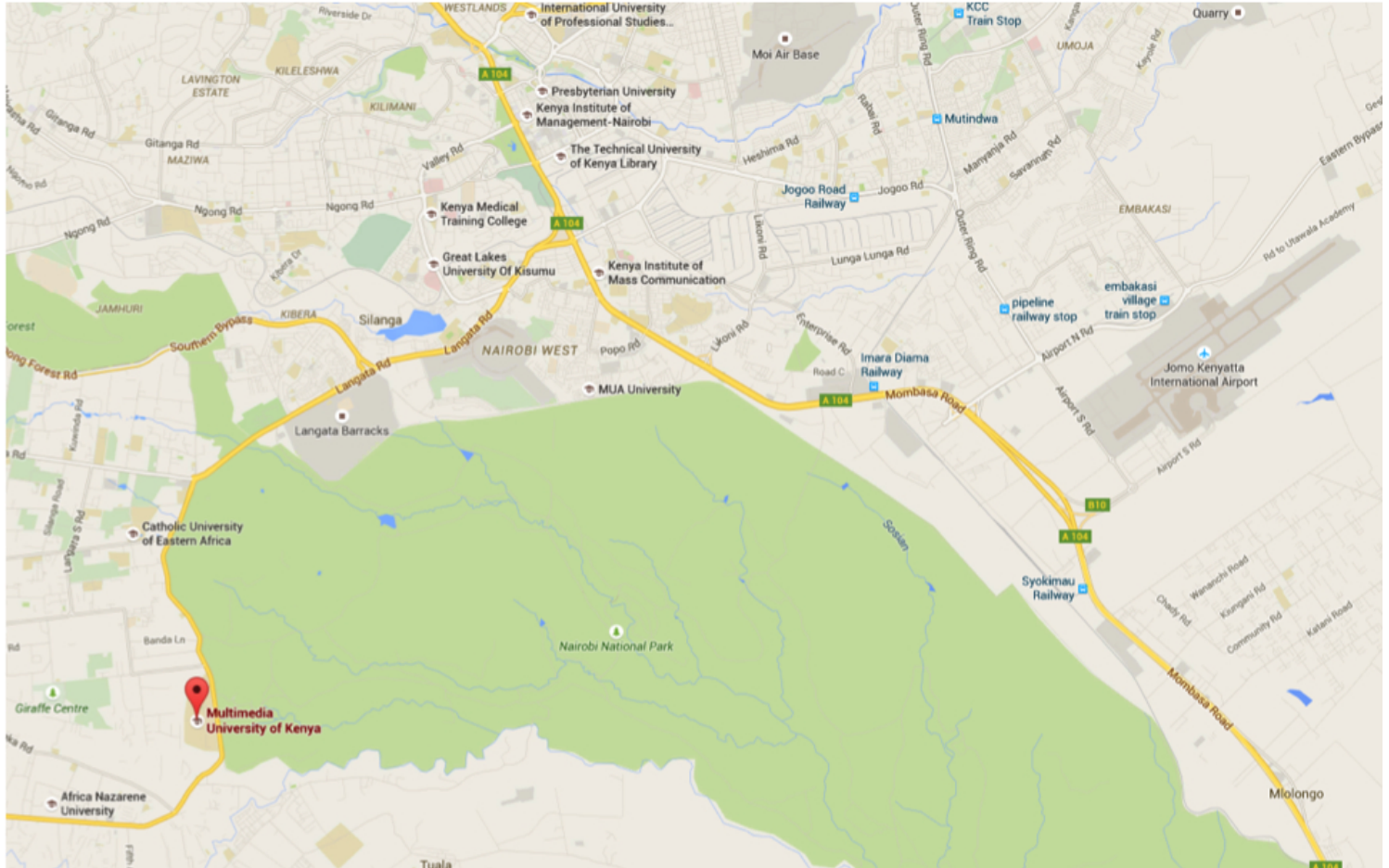


TDWG 2015 Pre-Conference Training Workshop

The 2015 TDWG conference will be preceded by a special capacity building activity for biodiversity information specialists from Sub-Saharan African countries. Thanks to a generous grant from the JRS Biodiversity Foundation, 25-30 African biodiversity specialists will be supported to participate in a 5-day biodiversity informatics training workshop. They will also be supported to participate in the TDWG conference the following week. The JRS Biodiversity Foundation and the Belgian Development Cooperation have been supporting the participation of small numbers of African biodiversity specialists in annual TDWG conferences since 2011. Surveys of the participants suggest that attending TDWG conferences is a highly valued experience; however, none of the past travel awardees has been able to sustain their engagement with TDWG. In supporting the 2015 training workshop and other activities planned for the TDWG conference itself, this latest JRS Biodiversity Foundation grant aims not only to provide African participants training in technology and standards for mobilizing biodiversity data from their countries, it has a secondary aim of catalyzing collaborations among African participants and TDWG members that will help the Africans to sustain their engagement with TDWG long term. For details on the kinds of training that will be offered and agendas, please [click here](#).



The pre-conference training workshop will be held 21-25 September 2015 on the campus of Multi-Media University (MMU, <http://www.mmu.ac.ke/>). MMU is located in a tranquil setting far from the Nairobi City Center on 115 ha of land bordering Nairobi National Park. MMU offers degrees in Engineering, Computer Science and Information Technology, Business, Media and Communications Studies.



Because of its close proximity to Nairobi National Park, the MMU campus has a resident warthog population, which helps to maintain the campus grounds. The campus is also periodically visited by troops of baboons and giraffe from the nearby park.



The self-contained MMU campus also features a hotel and conference center, complete with a restaurant and bar, laundry facilities, a medical dispensary with trained medical personnel, and a health club complete with a swimming pool, Jacuzzi, sauna, gym and a restaurant and sports bar of its own. Participants and trainers will use accommodations of the MMU Hotel and Conference Center and will have full access to facilities of the health club.

The training sessions will be held in two computer classrooms and conference room of the Kenya Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) at MMU, established through a recent partnership with the Korean Government and Samsung Corporation. The classrooms provide seating for 25-30 students, with computer workstations, digital project systems and Internet access.



Participants in the training program will have access to the workstations, but will be asked to bring their own laptop computers so that they can install and carry home with them any software involved in the training workshop.

In addition to the wildlife viewing opportunities on the MMU campus, workshop participants and trainers will take an advantage of the close proximity of Nairobi National Park to enjoy its major wildlife viewing attractions, including black rhino, lion, leopard, cheetah, hyena, buffaloes, giraffe, zebra, wildebeest, elands and diverse birdlife. This activity will mostly likely be scheduled on the Saturday after the workshop ends (26 September). Other nearby attractions include the Ivory burning site Monument, Nairobi Safari Walk, the Nairobi Animal Orphanage and the walking trails at hippo pools.



The TDWG conference will be held 28 September to 1 October 2015 at the Windsor Golf Hotel and Country Club northeast of Nairobi (<http://www.windsorgolfresort.com/>). The TDWG 2015 Conference website will provide details on travel, registration and accommodation options for the conference. Please stay tuned.



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 JRS Acknowledgement