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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 20 August 2010

InterMedia Researcher Hannah Bowen Named as Finalist for ESOMAR's Young Researcher of the Year Award

Washington, D.C. — Hannah Bowen, an InterMedia researcher working on projects throughout Africa, has been named as one of three finalists for ESOMAR's Young Researcher of the Year Award.

An international jury chose the finalists based on their projects' "practical applications and ability to affect world change." Hannah's entry explores the impact of digital technology in Sub-Saharan Africa—how researchers can address barriers preventing a wider adoption of new media technology and ways in which public and private entities can better reach and serve the diverse populations there.

This is the second year ESOMAR, the world organization for market research, will bestow this award, which showcases innovative market research from today's most promising young talent as they address challenging global issues of the day.

Hannah's work was based on data and analysis from the AudienceScapes project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. AudienceScapes (www.audiencescapes.org) is a multi-faceted initiative, including a research program and interactive website designed to support the work of development practitioners in understanding and reaching their target audiences and constituencies, from rural women to young urban males to policymakers.

As digital devices become more prevalent, Hannah contends, it becomes more and more important to understand the dynamics of African technology markets. Who are the leaders, and who is left out? What barriers prevent wider adoption of digital technology for economic growth, connectivity, e-governance, distance learning and more, especially among rural and BOP populations, women and youth?

“This is a wonderful opportunity to highlight the ways research can help policymakers understand and enhance the impact of technology on development,” Hannah said of the ESOMAR competition. “I’m excited about sharing the work we’ve been doing at InterMedia and jumpstarting additional discussions among the ESOMAR members in Athens.”

The award is part of ESOMAR’s Developing Talent initiative which aims to enhance the skills and expertise of young, exceptional, forward-thinking market research professionals from around the globe. The finalists demonstrated how research can improve understanding of one of this year’s three topics: AIDS/HIV, sustainable energy and the digital divide.

“We’re extremely proud of the work Hannah is doing, applying basic research methods well, delivering high quality data and insights, and addressing knowledge gaps that have practical applications across sectors in areas like health, gender equality and access to financial services,” said InterMedia COO Susan Gigli.

Hannah, along with the two other finalists, will present their submissions at the ESOMAR Congress in Athens, Greece, in September. A panel of industry leaders will name the winner.

“Developing young talent in the research industry is a key priority for ESOMAR,” said Finn Raben, ESOMAR Director General in a news release. “Although it may be a cliché to say that the future lies with our youth, there is in every cliché an underlying truth.”

-30-

InterMedia (www.intermedia.org) is a leading international communications and media research, evaluation and consulting organization creatively equipping clients to understand their audiences, gauge their effectiveness and target their communications in transitional and developing societies worldwide. Based in Washington, D.C., London, UK, and active year-round in more than 60 countries, InterMedia helps clients understand complex issues in challenging research environments. The company’s strengths include its people—area experts skilled in scientifically-based research and focused on client solutions—its vast global network of local research partners and contacts and its rich experience implementing more than 700 media and opinion surveys over the past 15 years.

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