1. Personal Statement

The personal statement is limited to 250-words in length and tells the admissions committee about your fit for the program.

According to the 2018 Indonesia National Basic Health Survey, 95.5% of Indonesians consume less vegetables and fruit, 33.5% lack physical activities, 29.3% of productive age people smoke every day, and over the past two decades, the number of obese Indonesian adults has doubled. Only around 67 percent of the Indonesians use a smartphone, and these people still lack health awareness due to ineffective media exposure.

Hence, I created two platforms to increase health literacy among people of all levels of society, "Mlijo Sehat" and "Sycomora." ~~I aim to educate society about the importance of a healthy lifestyle through the distribution of pamphlets and sharing sessions. In Indonesia, many households rely on vegetable traders (“mlijo/tukang sayur”). Hence, I believe that a humanistic approach and synergy with local wisdom will be more effective in increasing awareness about healthy living.~~ Meanwhile, "Sycomora" utilizes multiple social media outlets, such as Instagram, a website, and a podcast, as part of its comprehensive approach to engage younger generations who are active users of social media. It is a growing platform that focuses on preventive medicine, clarifying health myths that arise in society. To date, it has amassed 16.300 followers on Instagram in a year, demonstrating the importance of conveying health information in an accessible manner. These experiences have allowed me to hone my storytelling skills and utilize forms of media to engage and inform audiences.

With a background in both healthcare and media, I believe I have a unique perspective on how these two fields can intersect to create powerful and effective health messaging. This is the reason I choose to pursue a Master of Media, Medicine, and Health in Harvard Medical School as it is the only program in the United States to offer an evidence-based multidisciplinary storytelling and arts driven curriculum focusing on health education and interventions.

1. Why are you a good fit for this program, and how does the program fit into your career plans in 5-10 years? 250 words remaining

The Media, Medicine, and Health program aligns perfectly with my long-term career goals because it will equip me with the essential knowledge and skills to be a leader in my community. In the future, I desire to participate in Indonesia's 2045 vision, especially for Human Development and Mastery of Science and Technology in the health sector. Despite significant economic growth in recent years, Indonesia still faces severe health disparities in different regions, ethnic groups, and socioeconomic groups. The country has a large population and limited healthcare infrastructure, which makes it difficult for the citizens to respond effectively to health information. Consequently, (name the consequences of Indonesia’s health disparities)

After graduation, my short-term goal is utilizing my newfound knowledge to bridge the discrepancy of healthcare literacy. I would continue the expansion of my personal platforms, “Mlijo Sehat” and “Sycomora”, to craft a novel public health intervention, increasing Indonesians’ knowledge and awareness of health. I am also planning to contribute to the digital transformation team in the Ministry of Health (DTO) by collaborating in the development of the Indonesia Health Services (IHS) platform. Improving health literacy in Indonesia is critical to ensure that all citizens can access and effectively use digital health technologies to improve their health outcomes.

After broadening my skills and building a strong network of professionals in the society and government, my long term plan is to build a healthcare literacy NGO, Health Education and Literacy Partners. I hope to be at the forefront of the shift in the Indonesian health sector to be an agent of digital technology. Improving the healthcare system in Indonesia would save costs in the long run as we can prevent and manage chronic diseases, reduce the need for expensive medical treatments, and reduce mortality and morbidity rates from preventable diseases. This will transform the Indonesian healthcare paradigm from curative to preventive action and enable diverse cross-sector partnerships, fostering an Indonesian society that is equitable, empowered, and prosperous.

1. What health issue are you interested in exploring for your capstone, and what drew you to this issue? 250 words remaining

For my capstone project in the Media, Medicine, and Health program, I propose to develop a multimedia health literacy campaign to raise the awareness and management of chronic diseases in underserved populations. Chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer are major public health challenges that disproportionately affect low-income and minority communities. These populations often face significant barriers to accessing healthcare services and have limited health literacy, making it difficult for them to understand and treat their ailments. Through my capstone project, my campaign will provide culturally appropriate and easy-to-understand information on the prevention and management of chronic diseases, with a focus on empowering individuals to take an active role in their own health. **(I advise that you focus on writing the different ways you can deliver this campaign as your target audience is those with low level of digital literacy).**

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~~Media in the delivery of global health, as it is crucial in trust- building between healthcare providers and individuals. This area has not been explored fully in Indonesia, partly because of the unattractive methods the media currently uses to portray health awareness. I am confident that people still prioritize their health, and I would welcome the opportunity to take on a role in making public health media in Indonesia more informative and accessible. This could involve a variety of strategies, such as social media and information video to increase access to health-related information and improve communication between media outlets, health experts and the general public. Given the significant number of individuals in Indonesia who are unable to read and write, would the visual learning modality be a suitable option to consider.~~

~~Public service announcements can be used to raise awareness of health issues and to provide information on how to access health services, and can be distributed through television, radio, and social media, as there is currently a lack of public education about the preventive measures of diseases and a lack of media coverage in Indonesia. Moreover, cultural and linguistic heterogeneity should be taken into account and the potential health literacy impediments should be addressed. As Indonesia is a multi-ethnic nation with a variety of cultures and customs, it is essential that media be used to guarantee that all citizens, regardless of their background, are provided with reliable health information and resources. Furthermore, I seek to ensure that healthcare facilities in rural areas have access to these resources.~~

Hi Dinah,

I truly admire your goals and relevant experiences, and it appears that you are indeed a good candidate for this master’s program. You also have quite a detailed short-term and long-term plan.

However, I feel that some parts of your essays are too long-winded, especially the ones I’ve crossed out. I’ve also highlighted some parts that need a more direct approach and actionable steps. Please read my comments, and I suggest that you revise accordingly so that your essay does not appear maundering.

For the first prompt, remember to include your healthcare background. Did you work as a healthcare professional before applying? If so, what was your role, and how long did you work in this role? I also highlighted the "Mlijo" platform, as the current description for this one is obscure.

Because your target audience has a low level of digital literacy, it is critical that you address how you intend to deliver the campaign in the final prompt. Is the campaign targeted at Indonesia's rural population? Or are you targeting underserved populations worldwide?

Wishing you the best of luck!

Melinda