

MEDIA STATEMENT

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MEDIA STATEMENT: MDDA IMPLEMENTS NEW PROJECT FUNDING APPLICATION PROCESS

Johannesburg, South Africa, 06 August 2019. The Media Development & Diversity Agency (MDDA) is implementing a new project funding application process, both to streamline its application process, and therefore enhance efficiencies, and to enable it to more effectively deliver on its mandate of providing access to the media to those historically disadvantaged groups traditionally sidelined by the mainstream media.

The major change in the new project funding application process over the previous system is the introduction of a call for funding applications, with an application submission deadline (cut-off date). All applications submitted by the cut-off date will be considered, with those applications that are successful and those not successful being informed timeously. This means that, as opposed to the previous application process, which used the principle of “first come, first serve” when selecting projects for funding, resulting in an enormous backlog, the Agency will not retain projects on a waiting list. Projects are welcome to reapply in the next cycle of Board funding approvals if they feel they have addressed the reasons given for rejection by the MDDA.

Set up by an Act of Parliament in 2002 (MDDA Act No 14 of 2002), the Agency funded its first project in 2004 and has to date supported more than 250 media projects, covering both community radio and print and small commercial print. While this has meant that it has contributed significantly to the transformation of the media landscape in South Africa, there are still communities, including special interest groups, such as the youth and those people living with disability, that are underserved by the media. In addition, greater emphasis needs to be placed on correcting gender imbalances as well as equipping the sector for the 4IR. This has highlighted the urgent need for a more targeted approach by the MDDA to requesting project funding applications.

“With some 15 years of the MDDA funding projects, we have reached the stage where we urgently need to review and reassess the process of and criteria against which we fund projects as the environment in which we are now operating is very different to that of the early years of the Agency,” commented MDDA Acting CEO, Zukiswa Potye. “Challenges we are encountering and which urgently demand a new approach include the enormous backlog of projects we have accumulated with no prospect of being

