15 October 2017

Request for Proposals (RFP) from Potential Service Providers

Proposal Submission Deadline: Monday 13 November 2017

Project: Jeanette Minnie Memorial Online Course: Civil Society and African Media Policy

Overview: Interested service providers are asked to submit a proposal, with a budget estimated based on a daily rate valued in South African Rand (ZAR), for research, development, online provision, piloting and marketing of the first six modules of an automated Jeanette Minnie Memorial Online Course on "Civil Society and African Media Policy in the Digital Age".

A. Project Outline

Introduction
Jeanette Minnie, who passed away in George, South Africa, on 2 November 2016, was a leading media activist during her career. Minnie was a maker of history in the realm of freedom of expression and press freedom in southern Africa. She succeeded in building alliances and organisations, starting in the 1990s in South Africa and then working across southern Africa. Her work showed the value of civil society and media personnel in impacting on state policy, law and administrative action in the interests of freedom, pluralism and independence for media. This automated online course in Jeanette Minnie's name will follow within, and help to sustain, this tradition of promoting the value of bottom-up contributions to African media policymaking and implementation. The course will be available free of charge to users, empowering them with knowledge of the evolution of African media policy and lessons thereof, and with an understanding of current challenges in the digital age.

Aim and Target Audience
The course will aim to provide a knowledge-building resource that can empower civil society and media actors to improve policy, law and regulation for free, pluralistic and independent African media in the digital age. The course will be of stand-alone value to civil society activists, journalists, other media-sector actors, ministry officials, regulators and Parliamentarians, as well as serving as a supplement to African media courses for postgraduate students at tertiary education institutions.

Management, Governance, Funding
The project is managed by the LINK Centre, School of Literature, Language and Media (SLLM), University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Project governance is by an Advisory Committee comprising:
- LINK Centre representatives: Chris Armstrong (Visiting Fellow) and Justine Limpitlaw (Visiting Adjunct Professor)

- Namibia Media Trust representative: Zoe Titus
- Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) representative: Loughty Dube
- In individual capacities: Guy Berger, Hendrik Bussiek
- Honorary member: Pierre Minnie

Funding of the project is by the Bertha Foundation, the Namibia Media Trust (NMT), and fesmedia Africa.

The Advisory Committee will select the service provider.

Timeline
2017
- Advisory Committee selection of a service provider to research, develop, provide online, pilot, and market the first six modules of the course
- Contracting of the service provider

2018
- Contracting of subject-matter-expert Resource Persons to guide service provider on research, development and online provision of the six modules
- Service provider research, development, online provision and piloting of the course modules, in consultation with the Advisory Committee and with input from subject-matter-expert Resource Persons
- Marketing of course by service provider, LINK Centre, and Advisory Committee; commencement of participant usage

2019 onwards
- Continued participant usage
- Updating of the course content as and when necessary

Course Content, Participants, Result
The end product will be a web-based, fully-automated, online course, hosted on a free and open source e-learning platform that includes mobile functionality and promoted via the LINK Centre website, www.wits.ac.za/linkcentre, and via other web and email services identified and coordinated by the Advisory Committee. The expected outcome is that a total of 600 participants will complete the course (which will be open continuously) over a three-year period once the course is available online. The ultimate result will be knowledge-building so that participants understand how civil society can be a key driver in African media-related policy issues, and the importance of this tradition within the new context of digital developments and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Intellectual Property
Copyright in the course content will be held by the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, which will make the course content available online under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike licence, https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0

B. Requirements of the Service Provider
The interested service provider is requested to submit a proposal, with a budget estimate based on a daily rate in South African Rand (ZAR), for research, development, online provision, piloting and marketing of the first six modules of the course along the following parameters:

Research
In consultation with the Advisory Committee and with input from contracted subject-matter-expert Resource Persons and the Advisory Committee, the service provider will research module content in at least six of the following areas:

1. *Principles of freedom of expression and media freedom:* International and African standards (e.g. Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression) / Windhoek Declaration, African Platform for Access to Information / African constitutions / balancing act: Freedom of expression vs other rights / three-part test / legitimate restrictions / national security / defamation / 'false news' / hate speech / insult laws / responsibility of States / applicability of human rights standards to private sector actors

2. *The right of access to information:* Principles / exemptions and limitations / obligatory disclosure in the public interest / procedures / whistleblowers / implementation of legislation / African Platform for Access to Information / Sustainable Development Goal 16.10 on "public access to information and fundamental freedom"

3. *Regulatory histories:* History of print regulation / history of broadcasting regulation / history of Internet regulation / recent history of regulation of converged/converging broadcast/print/Internet space

4. *Self-regulation/co-regulation vs. statutory regulation of the media:* Professional standards, industry codes of conduct / implementing standards/codes: self-regulation/co-regulation vs statutory regulation / licensing of journalists and publications

5. *Independent broadcasting regulation:* The need for independent regulation / types of broadcasting (state/public/community/commercial) / the broadcasting regulator / scope of broadcasting regulation (language, local content etc.) / digitalisation

6. *Media pluralism and diversity regulation, support:* The need for media pluralism and diversity / regulating diversity / models / public, commercial and community broadcasters / public service media / national, regional and local services / sustainability /dangers of media concentration / dangers of abuse of market power / ownership & control issues / competition regulation / state-owned v. public media / governance and funding of public and community media / gender, language, urban-rural, class issues in pluralism and diversity

7. *Internet:* Media convergence via IP protocol / how to regulate non-linear broadcast-like services carried over Internet / Internet's transformative power / danger of fragmentation / how to protect Internet consumers from harm / privacy / "radicalisation" / cybersecurity / threats to the freedom of the Internet (permissible and questionable restrictions) / Internet cut-offs / industry self-regulation of Internet, social media / African Declaration on Internet Rights and Freedoms / Internet companies' evolving role as regards media content and advertising, including during elections

8. *Civil society and African media policy:* Past, present, future: UNESCO, MacBride Commission / Windhoek Declaration / Windhoek + 10 (African Charter on Broadcasting) / African democratisation in 1990s and 2000s / civil society coalitions / IFEX / NGOs active in freedom of expression/ World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) / Internet Governance Forum (IFG) / social media as a tool for mobilisation / Arab Spring / Future directions and concerns

The service provider will be expected to be familiar with other automated or primarily-automated online courses already in existence that, deal with freedom of expression issues, e.g., UNESCO's Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) in Spanish serving judges in Latin America; the "Freedom of Expression in the Age of Globalization" course by Columbia University's Global Freedom of Expression initiative; and the course in development at the European Media Project, Center for Media, Data and Society (CMDS), School of Public Policy, Central European University.

The service provider will assist the Advisory Committee in pinpointing the full distinctiveness of the proposed course vis-à-vis other courses, e.g., elaborating how the course will be designed from the point of view of civil society activism empowerment, and in what way it will be Africa-centric in content. Other issues requiring elaboration will be the extent to which the course will be case-study-based and visually-based.

Development

Upon Advisory Committee approval of the service provider's six proposed modules drawing on at least six of the above-listed eight subject areas, the service provider will finalise the content of each module, with input from the subject-matter-expert Resources Persons. The development process will include:

- Development of the specific four or five key questions or issues that underpin each module
- Development of the pages setting out key content of each module, including optional video resources where appropriate (keeping in mind bandwidth challenges), and including some use of testimonies and case studies of African media and civil society activism on policy
- Development, and sourcing, of copyright-free reading materials for each module:
  - compulsory readings, available electronically either via PDFs on the course web platform or via external URLs
  - Additional readings: these would be required to be available electronically either on the website itself or via a URL
- Development of the questions to be used for each module's automated test of comprehension of the module's core content

Online Provision, Piloting, Marketing

The service provider will upload and apply online design elements to the course content – or sub-contract and manage the uploading and online design process by a third party -- in a free and open source e-learning platform, in such a way that participants can engage with the course on an entirely automated basis.

The scope of the course will not extend to certification of a formal qualification. Instead, it will enable participants to do self-testing of their learning via automated Q&A tests online in each module. Participants who complete all the tests at a satisfactory level will receive an automated, digital University of the Witwatersrand Certificate of Attendance for the course.

The online course must be usable by approximately 200 students at any one time, and must be easily usable by participants throughout Africa, taking into account the need to be as low-bandwidth-consuming as possible given high data costs and poor broadband rollout on many parts of the continent.

Before opening of the course to public use, the service provider will subject the course to a piloting process, generating input from the Resource Persons, the Advisory Committee, and test users not familiar with the project. The service provider will design and implement the piloting strategy in consultation with the Advisory Committee, and will implement any amendments that may be required. The online course content will also include a brief online evaluation questionnaire that must be filled out by the participant before receiving the Certificate of Attendance.

The service provider will also design and implement, in consultation with Advisory Committee, a strategy for marketing of the course to target audiences.

At the end of 2018, the service provider will provide a report to the Advisory Committee on the progress of the project to date, with concrete recommendations for implementations in 2019 and beyond.

C. Proposal Checklist

The proposal should include the following:
- Estimated timeline, in 2018, for completion of each of the three phases outlined above: (1) research, (2) development, (3) online provision, piloting, marketing
- Estimated number of days of work by the service provider in each of the three phases, and a proposed daily rate, in South African Rand (ZAR), to be charged by service provider

- Name(s) of free and open source e-learning platform(s) to proposed by the service provider for online provision, including mobile functionality, of the course
- (if applicable) the name of the service provider's proposed e-learning content-uploading/design sub-contractor, the estimated number of days of work by this sub-contractor, and a proposed daily rate, in South African Rand (ZAR), to be paid by the service provider to this sub-contractor
- Short CVs for each member of the service provider team and (if applicable) of the e-learning content-uploading/design team, including indications of each individual's qualifications and experience relevant to the project
- Indication of the level of participation in the service provider team and (if applicable) in the e-learning content-uploading team, by "designated people" in terms of South Africa's Employment Equity Act, i.e., level of participation by black people, women, and people with disabilities

D. Proposal Submission

The proposal submission **deadline is Monday 13 November 2017.**

The proposal should be emailed simultaneously to:
- Chris Armstrong, LINK Centre, chris.armstrong@wits.ac.za
- Guy Berger, Advisory Committee member, gjegberger@gmail.com

Any questions about the proposal requirements or process should be emailed simultaneously to both Chris Armstrong and Guy Berger at the email addresses provided above.