

# ISOC Foundation to improve the livelihoods of Limpopo community

The Internet Society, an organisation that aims to connect the world to the internet, has awarded a grant to the ISOC South Africa-Gauteng Chapter to open a media centre in Mamaila Village, Limpopo.



This is one of the foundation's 13 projects that seek to spread the benefits of the internet around the world. The \$30,000 (more than R430,000) grant aims to improve the lives of its members through access to information and upskilling.

In addition to the off-the-grid Media Centre, which will provide internet access in a remote area with no access to telecom operator services, the funding will enable the Mamaila Tribal Authority to install Wi-Fi access points within the community.

The grant will also develop the community through training on cybersecurity, content development, entrepreneurship, and the construction, operation and maintenance of community networks. This will ultimately empower unemployed youth to organise themselves into cooperatives to advance their socio-economic aspirations and expand the planned network infrastructure.

"This is our concerted effort to help drive growth and development, especially while South Africa is grappling with one of the highest level of unemployment (29%) in the world and a shortage in critical skills," says Yandisa Sokhanyile, chairperson of

marketing and branding at the Internet Society South Africa-Gauteng Chapter.

“After receiving more than 40 applications from around the globe, and an almost three-month process of intense revision and analysis by a committee, we selected 13 winning projects located in South Africa, Turkey, Dominica, Canada, Armenia, Paraguay, Hong Kong, Portugal, Switzerland, USA, Nicaragua, Madagascar and Mali,” explains Sarah Armstrong, executive director of the Internet Society Foundation.

Earlier this year, Internet Society established the Internet Society Foundation to centralise and target funding for projects that will improve the quality of people's lives around the globe. The Foundation awards grants to Internet Society Chapters, as well as non-profit organisations and individuals dedicated to providing meaningful access to an open, globally connected, trustworthy Internet for everyone on one or more of the following programme areas:

- Initiatives that build community capacity to access and benefit from the internet (including digital literacy skills, reaching unconnected populations, awareness-raising and local content-production);
- Initiatives that respond to natural disasters;
- Opportunities for research across technical, economic and public policy topics;
- Initiatives that demonstrate innovative techniques to advance an Internet for all; and
- Local and regional projects supported by Internet Society's nearly 140 Chapters (Beyond the Net).

In early 2020, the Internet Society Foundation will launch its next call for grant applications for projects that strengthen communities and improve lives and livelihoods.

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