



Annual Report

July 2024

This report covers the period from 1 March 2023 to 31 February 2024.

Introduction

The Henry Nxumalo Foundation (HNF) has since 2007 (originally as the Taco Kuiper Fund) given grants and other support to investigative journalists in South Africa. Over the 17 years of its operation, it has made 96 grants to the value of R8,6-million.

Grants

During this financial year, HNF approved seven grants though some grants flowed into this financial year from the previous year when the call was made. The total value of grants this year was R603 318.00 (including some completion payments that will be paid in the following financial year).

Five of these grants came from thematic calls for applications: three from the call for investigations into kidnappings for ransom, and two for investigations into the construction mafia.

We also paid out project completion grants (grant funds held until project is completed) of R91 768.00.

Completion/Outstanding projects

Of the seven grants given in this financial year, five have been completed. One has been delayed by illness and a major book project is still underway.

We have four outstanding projects from previous years, including one in which we have to consider legal action to recover our money because of non-delivery.

Highlights of published work

For a list, see our website: <https://henryxumalofoundation.co.za/previous-grantees/>

We also assisted seven of our grantees to attend the African Investigative Journalism Conference (in the financials as “Events”.)

Research

Concerned about the growing financial and security problems faced by freelance journalists, including some of our grantees, we agreed to co-fund with the SA National Editors Forum (SANEF) research into the working condition of South Africa’s freelance journalists. This work is being undertaken by Dr Sarah Chiumbu of Wits University and Dr Allan of Botswana University and is due by end-July.

Administration

We pay an administrator for occasional part-time support on an hourly basis, a financial consultant to manage our financial records and reporting, and a web developer by the hour to keep our site updated. Our admin costs are extremely low - something we can be proud of, though the plans below outline how this may need to change.

The Future

I have had some concerns in recent years that the work we fund is of inconsistent quality and impact. We have until now had a hands-off approach, giving grants out and letting grantees get on with it, except to offer mentorship for less experienced journalists. In the interest of raising standards, we will be trying a more hands-on approach with more direct involvement in planning and executing the work and in ensuring it has maximum impact. This coincides with important developments in the funding of investigative journalism in the southern African region. USAID put out a call for proposal for a \$12-million grant over five years (about R240-m) to promote and enable investigative journalism in selected Southern

African countries. This is a massive amount that will change the landscape (perhaps, but not necessarily, for the better).

We participated in this bid in two ways: we put together our own consortium with IJ Hub, Oxpeckers, Viewfinder, Fray Media and the Media Develop and Investment Fund (MDIF) (with ourselves as the primary applicant). We also participated in IJ Hub's consortium, where they were the primary. The latter one got through to the final round, along with two other applicants and we now await a final decision. For a variety of reasons, it is probably better for us to hold a corner of another consortium where someone else has to take on the immense responsibility of reporting to USAID and we can focus on what we do best. As things stand, we would be eligible for at least R2,4 million per year for three years

Our proposal is to use this to create a pipeline of cross-border, collaborative work with a much-more hands-on approach in conceiving, planning, editing and promoting the work, along with training to support the work.

The EU has also put out a call for proposals for a E500 000 (R10 million) grant over three years. In this one, we are the primary applicant in a smaller consortium – with IJHub, Oxpeckers and Viewfinder – and this bid has got through to the final round. We use the same model of creating a pipeline for cross-border collaborative work with us offering training, editing, placing of stories, etc.

If either of these grants are approved, then it will mean substantial growth in our operation and changes in our modus operandi. To summarise: we would need to expand our administrative capacity to deal with the extra burden; and to gear up to offer more mentorship, training and editing as part of the process. It will also mean us contracting more financial, admin and editorial support.

We have also decided to test this model in a partnership with Viewfinder. We have put out a joint call for proposals for a collaborative cross-border project, and plan to bring together a cohort of about six people to do this. We will share the costs on a 50-50 basis and have signed an MOU to this effect.

All of this means, that we look forward to a year of growth and expansion.

Anton Harber
Executive Director