

RHODES UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
& MEDIA STUDIES

JOURNALISM SUMMIT 2024

SEEDS OF CHANGE
CULTIVATING THE FUTURE
OF JOURNALISM IN AFRICA



**SUMMIT
REPORT**
MAY 2024



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At a press conference during the 50th anniversary celebrations of Rhodes' School of Journalism and Media Studies in 2022, Prof Sizwe Mabizela – the VC of Rhodes University – committed the University to hosting a journalism summit in which journalism practitioners and educators would examine the role and responsibilities of journalism education in the context of contemporary South African political, economic and social environment. The Summit, which expanded its outlook to looking at the future of journalism in Africa, took place from 4 – 6 April 2024.

The Summit sought to help us get to grips with the precarious terrain journalism must both inhabit and report on. Research indicated that journalism was facing a series of headwinds and needed to explore a new path into the digital era and beyond. The advent of factors such as Artificial intelligence, the emergence of monopolistic large corporations in the media industry, and the decline in the belief in the independence of the media, digital attacks on journalists and free speech, harassment and killings of journalists and truth tellers, journalistic corruption. Check book journalism signaled the commodification of news. This meant that journalism had to square up to a multi-dimensional crisis.

The decolonisation movement has also challenged journalism to review its ethos – values, ethics, routines, and practices. Journalism has, throughout the century, been justified in terms of its contributions to democracy. Further, journalism in the early part of the century was defined as a public good but due to public policies imposed in South Africa and the rest of the African continent since the dawn of universal franchise, which can be broadly characterised as neo-liberal, are killing democracy and fraying public goods. The public policy packages have had a potent impact on various spheres of human endeavour. The conference concerned itself with the impact of this policy agenda on the media and on institutions of public media such as the SABC, and the MDDA. The profound irony at the heart of this summit is that public broadcasting was set up particularly after the 2nd world war as one of the institutions designed to be defenders of modern democracy and an antidote to tyranny. In the same period, public broadcasting was set up as a public good, yet in the neo-liberal era from 1975 to the present, it has been decimated by waves of privatization, commercialisation, monetization, and periodic mass assaults on organized labour in the sector. The effect has been that far from being a democracy propeller, public broadcasting now admits messages that are hostile to the domestic ethos and the idea of a public good. Far from speaking to its audiences as citizens, it now intrudes neo-liberal fashion, views them as consumers who must pay for their consumption on an individual basis, the relationship to the country and its people is now transactional and mediated by money. The finalization of audience relations in public broadcasting has had negative effects on the quality of news as well as the national sense of mutual rights and obligations and sense of citizenship, as well as on public mores.

Yet, coloniality permeates production systems, knowledge systems, and language preferences, begging the question “who is included in the dialogue of democracy and who is excluded and why?”

Technology is propelling journalism towards a ubiquitous future. Never have fact-checking, verification, and the basic operational tenets of journalism been more challenged than they are now. Universally, journalists are being asked to switch their mindsets to understand their role in a post truth world and in a world in which all-powerful artificial intelligence is on the rise.

What was achieved?

The conference consisted of two major sections: a pre-conference dealing with journalism education and a student media conference and the main summit which dealt with journalism and democracy, trauma, regulation and funding models, as well as the challenges of artificial intelligence and digital media. Registration began on Wednesday the 3rd of April 2024 at 14:00 hours and the conference proceeded for 2 and a half days ending at midday on Saturday the 6th of April, with a press conference issuing into the public domain, a document now known as the “Makhanda Declaration”.

The conference was divided into four streams:

1. Journalism as a public good – revisiting the ethos of journalism.

Convener: Prof Anthea Garman

In 1997, the newly constituted South African National Editors' Forum and the Rhodes journalism department convened an media industry-educators' discussion called “A new

paradigm for journalism in South Africa" (see the report at https://rjr.ru.ac.za/rjrpdf/rjr_no15/new_paradigm.pdf). Eager to abandon the form of journalism that had worked so closely with the apartheid state, and led by Joe Thlooe, we described old paradigm features as journalism that had no sensitivity to its African context, that was fragmented into content areas with little sense-making between them, that held onto the idea of being a "mirror" to a fractured society, instead of embracing a much more active role. This was a journalism that was reactive and held fiercely to "balance" and objectivity in a society that was riven with inequalities along race, class and gender lines. Ownership of the media was in the hands of a few, and the feisty independent media were about to die from lack of funding. But we had high hopes of change. We drafted a policy statement that said: "In recognition of our role in society as storytellers; as the link between South African citizens and the world; we strive to promote: Stories, told in a multiplicity of African voices that are well researched; contextualised; analytical; interpretive; in dialogue with, and respectful of an audience that is complex and diverse through media that are owned 1. symbolically the audience and economically by a diverse group of stakeholders, enabled by newsroom structures that empower storytellers.

2. Translating voices, advancing journalism in the digital era

Convener: Dr. Alette Schoon

The AI, Data and Journalism stream is committed to proposing interventions, strategies and solutions that promote journalism for the public good in the context of AI, ubiquitous data, and the rise of platformization. These proposals will be made with the understanding that journalism in this country has been embedded in a long history of selective and extractive storytelling where the legacy of apartheid and colonialism has made working conditions for journalists nearly unbearable as they report from the traumatising space of a brutal unequal and violent society. Meanwhile the rush for profits has hollowed out the industry and new platform economies have ripped apart economic models for journalism. This has placed our journalists under increasing and often unimaginable strain. We as journalism educators and leaders have been complicit in our silence. We therefore have a responsibility to unite and find ways to support and decolonize our industry and create an African journalism that is focused on building relationships, solutions, strong institutions, communities, and human dignity. We recognize that conversations around technology have often been framed in exclusionary patronizing depoliticized discourses promoting foreign solutions. These have largely ignored and excluded the masses of less- connected people who struggle with limited access to this new shifting digital world. We commit ourselves to grappling with these challenges in an inclusive humanising and accessible manner and to work together to find solutions. Some of the proposals for discussion in our stream are: educating journalists about reporting on and developing new skills in an ecosystem of AI and big data ubiquity in the African context; modifying journalistic ethics codes to champion an ethics of care and protecting the public good in the context of AI and ubiquitous data; developing strategies to come together in interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral teams for lobbying big tech platforms in the service of democracy and journalism for the public good; and developing regulation and policy initiatives for AI and big data that champion the rights of vulnerable people above profits.

3. Charting a course: Reregulation and funding futures in the media

Convener: Dr Taryn De Vega

Digitalisation and the rise of the internet and online technologies have transformed the media industry. Production, consumption, and distribution channels have migrated online, resulting in a new mode of operations for the press. Reregulation and funding futures in the media grapples with the realities of an evolving industry, focusing specifically on the consequences of this evolution for financing, sustainability, and regulation in South Africa. Developing a sustainable ecosystem, in which credible news journalism can serve the needs of a democratic South Africa and its citizens, requires deliberative participation by the media, its audiences, and other stakeholders. Collectively, we reflect on the media and its future. Respecting the role of public interest media, we examine legislation and regulatory policy, prioritising the goal of universal access for all citizens. Valuing the sustainability of the press, we explore funding models for multimedia operations across digital and internet platforms. Recognising the importance of high- quality, ethical journalism, we consider the need for improved accountability systems and responsive

regulatory oversight. And acknowledging the developments in AI and social media, we scrutinise digital platform governance and efforts to counter online harm. Thirty years into democracy, South Africa and its media stand at the precipice of possibility. Journalism and the media must continue to adapt to the changing media landscape, remain responsive to the technological innovations across digital, online, social media and AI technologies, and continue serving the public and its interests through various mediums. This stream draws on this opportunity to think through the digital turn, navigate the industry's responsiveness to ongoing change, and chart a course for the country's future.

4. In the eye of the Storm: Going Beyond the Headlines to Heal Trauma, PTSD, and pain in Journalism

Convener: Ms Thandeka Gqubule-Mbeki

The existence of communities of practice in journalism that have been subjected to periods and moments of sustained trauma and conflict on the African continent and in our country, necessitated a discussion on trauma during the conference. Journalists from Northern Nigeria who had covered the insurgency of Boko Haram presented at the conference led by Ms Yusuf Ada Nurat Tosin. It emerged that journalists in Northern Nigeria were subjected to years of heightened trauma and violence and many lost their lives. The insurgency in the North of Mali due to Tuareg military action has caused strife, trauma and grief for journalists in this region of Africa. Accordingly, ECOWAS, the regional cooperation body of West African states has developed a regional, international body on the safety of journalists – fortified by a court mechanism under ECOWAS. This report from West Africa presented findings in media assessments that indicated that events have left a deep information gap between the North and South in West Africa, with the North being information poor due to military and armed conflict in the Northern regions of West Africa. The conference also heard of how journalists were evacuated from the North, leading to a news blackout in the afflicted regions. The conclusion reached in the discussions is that the conflicts had succeeded in stalling media development, press freedom and freedom of expression in the Northern regions of West Africa.

In East Africa we heard of the impoverishment of journalists by deferred and delayed salary payments which leads to stress, trauma, corruption, and the degradation of the standing of the media. The presentation was given by Mr. Nicholas Anyour, presented a desperate multi-faceted crisis of financial sustainability of the media in Kenya. Due to the collapse of the advertising-industrial model of the media and the dire economic circumstances of the media in Kenya, journalists, struggled to get remuneration. Such paid delays, lead to content distortion. Bias and corruption creep in due to the financial vulnerability of journalists as politicians' step in to pervert the system of media production by paying journalists themselves. This leads to a crisis of trust in the East African media as Kenya is the epicentre of media in East Africa. We were informed of collective solutions and social clubs that journalists have formed to assist each other during this time of trial.

A presentation from the DART Centre for Journalism and Trauma at Columbia University was delivered by Professor Bruce Shapiro. The DART Centre for Journalism and Trauma is a resource centre for journalists who cover violence, conflict, and tragedy around the world. As the DART Centre is yet to establish a presence in Africa, Rhodes University's School of Journalism and Media Studies is set to undertake negotiations concerning situating a DART Centre in our SPI (Sol Plaatjie Institute for Media Management).

The Makhanda Declaration

As part of the work of the summit, participants reiterated that journalism is a form of communication with a particular ethos oriented towards citizen empowerment, the transparency and accountability of power (both public and private) and the building of democracy. It is important to provide all people with accurate information to address past injustices and restore dignity and empowerment to citizens and that Journalism is essential in fulfilling this duty. Also, in addressing the dehumanisation of the past, part of redress is that access to credible, verifiable information is necessary for the dignity and agency of citizens, we believe that Journalism still has a fundamental role to play in this constitutional obligation. Therefore, the summit drew up a draft "Makhanda Declaration" covering the life and changing times of journalism and delivered it at a press conference on Saturday 6 April.

PRE-CONFERENCE STREAMS

The Past, Present and Future of Socially Responsive Journalism Education in South Africa

Conveners: Dr Jeanne du Toit and Quatro Mgogo

Keynote address:

The university as a neoliberal institution and the implications for the critical education of professionals.

Professor Sioux McKenna

Director of the Centre of Postgraduate Studies at Rhodes University.

Session 1

Reflecting on our past: How well have journalism educators fared in the shaping and support of journalism for a new democracy?

Panelists

Prof Anton Harber

Henry Nxumalo Foundation

Prof Abiodun Salawu

Director of the Indigenous Language Media in Africa

Prof Herman Wasserman

Chair of the Department of Journalism, Stellenbosch University

To set the tone for this pre-conference session, Professor Sioux McKenna asked the meeting to consider what it would take to rethink the university as a space of learning if it is to nurture critical professionals. She proposed that university-based educators should be teaching students ways of being and thinking that are both critical and compassionate. Students should be challenged to examine how power is located in society; to consider who they want to be in that society and to develop ways of putting those goals into practice. McKenna asked the meeting to explore the implications of her arguments for university-based journalism education that is dedicated to the public good. What does such education look like? And what kind of journalism does it encourage?

Against this backdrop, the meeting then looked back at the thirty years of teaching and learning about journalism that has taken place since the birth of a democratic South Africa. Delegates were invited to consider the extent to which they, as participants in that history, had promoted and enabled journalisms that serve the public good. The three panellists were: Anton Harber, Herman Wasserman and Abiodun Salawu.

Herman Wasserman spoke about the massive challenges that has affected communities of journalistic practice in South Africa over the past thirty years. He argued that in context of such change journalism has become shaped by two contradictory processes. On the one hand it is now decentred and has lost its status and authority as the central gatekeeper of truth; instead it exists as just one amongst a range of communication practices that claim to be dedicated to truth-telling. On the other hand, in context of the increased need for reliable information, journalists still have a unique role to play in service of the public good. As a response, Wasserman proposed that university-based journalism education should explore approaches to teaching a diversity of journalisms based in open, participatory and collaborative relationships with allies in civil society who are equally invested enabling democratic conversation. Within such a framework, journalists are no longer gatekeepers and instead become "gate openers."

Anton Harber focused on Journalism Education as it has evolved at the University of Witwatersrand where he worked for two decades. He explained that the location of this programme was advantaged by its proximity to an urban-based media industry. However, Journalism Education at Wits remained under-resourced and under staffed. Educators responded by building a project-based model for the integration of journalism within the university, which enabled them to access funding. They also focused on experimenting with forms of journalism that was enabled by their location within the space of the university. Harber ended by proposing that journalism education in South Africa should foreground a focus on the African history of media and journalism. This would enable educators to place their emphasis on the development of locally grounded journalistic practices, informed by a local ethos. Students would learn to make sense of the political economy of the media and how technological change has always formed part of this.

Abiodun Salawu reflected on the extent to which journalism educators in South Africa have done justice to the task of encouraging multilingual and indigenous language journalism. He argued for an approach to journalism education that is culturally and linguistically sensitive and that acknowledges the languages spoken by learners and their communities. He argued that there is need for a more sustained and coherent approach to such teaching. He pointed to examples of projects and practices from across the globe that are dedicated to the strengthening of multilingual and indigenous media, and argues for they provide models for the South African context.

Session 2

Confronting the present: key challenges and opportunities for journalism education.

Panel 1, Panelists:

Jude Mathurine

Lecturer at the Department of Media and Communications at Nelson Mandela University

Nyx McLean

Chair of the National Research Committee at Eduvos and a Research Associate of the School of JMS at Rhodes University

Wallace Chuma

Associate Professor of Media Studies at the Centre for Film and Media Studies, UCT

In the second session of the day participants were invited to consider journalism education that responds holistically to students' lived realities by adopting approaches to teaching and learning informed by an ethics of care. In the first panel of this session, Jude Mathurine pointed out that over the past decade, the demographics of Journalism Education classrooms have changed. The majority of students are the first people from their families to attend universities, they come from rural and peri-urban backgrounds, they speak English as a second or third language and they are economically disadvantaged. Their high school education does not prepare them adequately for university. Many of them

battle with mental health, and many have been exposed to gender-based violence. They also have limited access to news media. Mathurine argues for an approach to education that responds with a pedagogy of empathy, in a way that acknowledges these students' lived realities. He proposes that "listening" (as argued for by Wasserman and Ward) should be at the foundation of such an approach, so that educators can better understand the issues that students face.

Nyx McLean argued for an inclusive, intersectional and "care-full" journalism curriculum. Like Mathurine, they envisioned a curriculum that is reflective of the lived realities of journalism students. They proposed that this could be achieved through a participatory re-design of the curriculum which should involve current students, recent graduates, journalists and other stakeholders. In addition, teachers need to consider their own lived realities, and how their own privilege and power may play out in their interactions with students. McLean ended by underlining the importance of an ethics of care, in which educators and student work collectively towards an inclusive and care-full curriculum.

Wallace Chuma also argued for an approach to Journalism Education that recognizes journalists as human beings, not "stenographers of reality". There is, in other words, a need to fully acknowledge the person who is supposed to perform that Herculean task of "informing society". The world that they are required to report on is complex and defined by violence. Journalists not only have to report on trauma but become personally traumatized because they are the targets of harassment, rape, and racism. How does this work affect them, and how can we prepare students for this impact? Chuma also argues for courses aimed at working journalists, that can prepare them and sustain them to work under these difficult circumstances.

The next panel focused on the wide diversity of ways in which journalism education must adapt to the radical changes taking place in journalism practice from shrinking newsrooms to the increasing complexity of fact checking in a digital world and the emergence of Artificial Intelligence.

Carina Van Wyk pointed out that in journalism students now need to be much better prepared for the task of fact-checking, and also to identify and counter the spread of misinformation.

Mandla Radebe focused on the rise of artificial intelligence, its transformative impact on news production and the perceived threat that this poses for work opportunities in journalism. He argued there is a need to build a nuanced analysis of the relationship between technological progress and news production and in particular, for acknowledgment of the role that media ownership plays in this relationship, in context of strategies for cost-cutting and the increase of profit.

Sifiso Mnisi asked delegates to look at Journalism Education through the lens of post-industrial journalism. He proposed that the changes in our curriculum needs to better reflect the shifts that have characterised the marketplace of journalism. The rate of graduate unemployment in South Africa is alarmingly high, which means that we are preparing students for a profession that might not want them. Mnisi offered two contrasting visions for the role of journalism education can play in this context: on one hand, if journalism has been decentred and it now operates as one social practice amongst many others without any special status as a profession, we could step away from preparing our students for that profession. If the market no longer offers employment for journalists we should perhaps allow the profession to die a peaceful epistemic death. On the other hand, there continues to be a need in society for journalists and universities should continue to produce graduates who are able to do the work of journalists. Mnisi also proposed that we should be placing the emphasis on entrepreneurial journalism and on the nurturing of an entrepreneurial mindset amongst our students.

Theodora Dame Adjin-Tetty also focused on the increasing challenge faced by journalism students in finding employment after graduation. She said there should be a strong focus on experiential learning, in which students build relationships with professional environments of practice. Students also need to develop knowledge and competence that is of value to those spaces. There should, for this reason, be a focus on innovation and flexibility as key learning outcomes. Students and staff also need to pursue research that builds towards models of sustainable journalism.

Mark Frederiks pointed out that the people who make decisions about investment in technology do not have the interests of the public good at heart. This is the environment in which we operate as teachers, and for this reason we should consider looking back in history, and argue for the continued value of the old ways of doing things.

Panel 2, Panelists:

Carina Van Wyk

Head of Education and Training at Africa Check

Mandla J. Radebe

Associate Professor in the Department of Strategic Communication and the Director of the Centre for Data and Digital Communications at the University of Johannesburg

Sifiso Mnisi

Senior lecturer in the Department of Communication and Media within the School of Communication at the University of Johannesburg)

Theodora Dame Adjin-Tetty

Senior lecturer at the Department of Media, Language and Communication, Durban University of Technology and a Research Associate at the School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University

Mark Frederiks

Photography lecturer at Walter Sisulu University

PRE-CONFERENCE STREAMS

Session 3:

Looking ahead: adapting our curricula for the future.

Panelists

Dinesh Balliah

Director of the Wits Centre for Journalism in Johannesburg

Nyasha Mboti

Head of Department of Communication Science and Associate Professor at the University of the Free State

Yoliswa Mgedezi

Acting Head of Department of the Journalism Programme at Walter Sisulu University

Session 3 – conceptualising the future: What work do educators need to do together, from their location at different educational institutions around the country, in order to prepare their graduates for the future.

Dinesh Balliah spoke about journalism as a shrinking fort, where people inside are clamouring to keep the walls up while those on the outside are participating in an information ecosystem and resisting the term 'journalist'. Balliah suggests that as educators we need to shift our gaze from an exclusive focus on those people who call themselves journalists and include other communication practitioners who are equally committed to democracy through information production, outside the boundaries of journalism. The industry has collapsed, so we no longer have a compass. Instead we should renew our commitment to basic principles of agility and responsiveness. And we have to teach our students to teach themselves, so that they can continue adapting to a swiftly changing world. Also, we should watch what will be happening over the next few years in community media. We do not need to hold on to the mainstream media as our primary space of engagement. And when we collaborate with people outside the journalistic fort, this should not just be with people who are "like journalists", but also bloggers, vloggers and influencers.

Nyasha Mboti noted the talk about the journalism industry being in crisis. However, at the same time, he observes a fetishisation of journalism, which he says does not match the reality; indeed, if we took away journalism today, life would go on. We are already in the era of post journalism, where the product of news that used to be sacrosanct has become compromised. In response to this, Mboti proposal is that we should perhaps not do anything and simply accept the demotion of journalism just get used to it.

Yoliswa Mgedezi agreed that the field of journalism is confronted with many challenges and we should start by engaging with the industry that we are feeding our students to. Media houses complain that our students are not well prepared for work in their organisations. Lecturers should be spending time in the environments of media work and we should survey our graduates about their experiences of those spaces. We would then be better placed to return to the university to review curricula.

In the final reflections of the day, it was pointed out that on that afternoon, the next event within the Summit was going to be a ceremony in recognition of journalists who have been killed in situations of war and conflict around the world. In this context, journalism educators continue to have a role to play in championing the social purpose of journalism.

Shaping Africa's narrative: Harnessing the student media to redefine African storytelling

Convener: **Ms Kerry Lanaghan**

The Student Media Pre-Conference covered a range of important topics that need to be addressed in order to ensure student media continues to thrive. The main topics included the importance of collaboration, support and the protection of those involved in student media to ensure that their right to freedom of expression is not hindered.

The discussion shed light on the importance of collaboration. This included how different university departments could collaborate with the journalism department to make student media better. There were also discussions about how student media from different universities could work together, sharing stories and ideas to make their work even better. Participants believed that sharing practices and resources could enrich the overall student media landscape, benefiting all involved.

One big issue that came up was how hard it can be for student media to keep university institutions, like the Student Representative Council (SRC), in check. Participants noted that student journalists often face obstacles when trying to report on sensitive issues within the university community. This challenge highlighted the importance of freedom of expression and protecting journalists' rights, which are guaranteed in Section 16.1 (a) and (b) of South Africa's constitution.

Financial and general support for student media emerged as another critical topic. Participants stressed the need for universities to provide funding and resources to student media outlets, enabling them to operate effectively and independently. Increased support could lead to better and more diverse student media content. This led to the concern of remaining independent while receiving support from the university. Participants acknowledged the importance of financial and general support from universities in ensuring the sustainability of student media outlets. However, the need for student media to maintain its independence and editorial control was highlighted. It was suggested that clear guidelines and agreements could help ensure that the support provided by universities does not compromise the independence of student media.

Another key aspect of the discussion was the need for student media to adapt and innovate in the new digital era. With the rise of online platforms and social media, student journalists are faced with both new opportunities and challenges. Participants emphasized the importance of embracing digital tools and platforms to reach a wider audience and stay relevant in an increasingly digital world. They also discussed the need to maintain ethical standards and journalistic integrity in the digital space.

Participants also stressed the importance of student media remembering why it does what it does. The importance of the role of student media in providing a voice for students, holding institutions accountable, and fostering a sense of community on campus was highlighted. There was emphasis on the idea that student media should stay true to its core values and mission, even as it adapts to new technologies and challenges.

Overall, the discussion highlighted the multifaceted nature of student media and the challenges and opportunities it faces in the current landscape. By embracing collaboration, innovation, and independence, student media can continue to play a vital role in campus life and the broader community.

Speakers:

Ms Catherine White

Cat White Media

Mr Tafadzwa Tseisi

Co-founder, Journalism Students Network of Zimbabwe

Ms Naomi Grewan

Associate Producer and Communications Manager at Radio Workshop

MAIN CONFERENCE STREAM 1

Journalism as public good: revisiting the ethos of Journalism

Convener: **Prof Anthea Garman**

Speakers:

Prof Pierre de Vos

(Claude Leon Foundation Chair in Constitutional Governance, UCT Law Faculty)

Prof Herman Wasserman

Chair of the Department of Journalism, Stellenbosch University

Ms Lynsey Chutel

Reporter *The New York Times* and co-author of *Coloured: How Classification Became Culture*

Prof Nick Binedell

Rise Mzansi

Ms Zukiswa Kota

Programme Manager at the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM)

Mr Phila Nkayi

Community activist

The situation that motivated this stream was a deep concern that in 2024 journalism is, to put it mildly, battered. Since 1994 the massive digitisation of newsrooms has resulted in loss of jobs, powerful new competitors for advertising revenue arose and changed the shape of communication and news. Maintaining a democracy and accountability through the rockiest of political upheavals with a concerted attempt to steal our country's resources and finances and to capture the media was deeply challenging and left much of journalism compromised. There was a strong sense that it was time to revisit what we do, how we do it, with what resources and supports and who we do it for. The ethos or core value of journalism was the agenda item for the stream on journalism as a public good. The questions posed to speakers and delegates were: What core value will power the journalism of the future? How can journalism claim its rightful place as a public good? How do we ensure that in a highly stratified and unequal society that our public media provides the very best information in the languages people speak? How do we stop simply holding politicians to account and begin inspiring citizens to be active, involved and have hope that what they do – even in little ways at local level – will matter?

The keynote speaker for this stream, Prof Pierre de Vos, constitutional law expert, reminded the audience that freedom of expression in the South African constitution is not only linked to the rights and obligations of the citizen, in order to give the citizen the power to participate effectively in governance, but more importantly freedom of expression is directly linked to dignity. This means more than simply allowing for those previously dispossessed who were robbed of good information to now access a variety of choices, but it also means that the power to express oneself as one chooses and the power to access good information and make decisions for one's own life gives dignity. This factor is the crucial consideration in thinking about journalism's value for a society like ours, he said, because dignity is linked to agency. "Without information dignity and agency are both affected," he said. The critical loss for journalism in a world of social media platforms is that they no longer have the "pivotal power to curate and mediate," he said. Democracy is in crisis around the world, and in South Africa the crisis is "particularly acute." De Vos said he thought that there was no future in continuing to work at the "grand narrative of nation-building," instead journalists should work at building communality and connectedness, and "fostering relationality across difference."

This critical factor, journalism's diminished role in society and in political life, because of a plethora of communication outlets dealing in news and informational and analytical media, then became the key topic for the day.

Prof Herman Wasserman returned to an article written by journalism studies theorists Kaarle Nordenstreng and Clifford Christians in which they outlined three key obligations for a journalism that is "citizen-centred" and which could be embraced by journalists all over the world, regardless of culture or country:

Respect for human dignity

Truth-telling (in the article they say, "Language is the primary means of social formation, and therefore, human existence is impossible without an overriding commitment to truth" (2009, 22).

Nonviolence based on the sacredness of life.

To this Wasserman added his own understandings of journalism as a public good by focusing on the role of listening in a world saturated with media messages and in which social networking sites have made it possible for every individual to broadcast an opinion or communicate about their lives. This overly loud and frenetic space places an obligation on journalists to listen, to pay attention to voices that should matter in public, and to be aware of not just responding to powerful voices. It also requires that journalists connect narratives and make sense of an excess of pieces of information. Echoing De Vos' concern with dignity, Wasserman advocated an ethics of care for journalists which involves commitment, compassion and immersion. This ethical orientation towards the public good, Wasserman contended, rather than continued claims to professional status, could distinguish journalism from other forms of content production in a media environment saturated with information.

Journalist Lynsey Chutel, researcher Zukiswa Kota, local activist Phila Nkayi and Rise Mzansi candidate Prof Nick Binedell, all spoke with conviction about how a journalism that makes common cause with organisations working on social justice struggles had been extremely successful in the past, and continues to be fruitful today. A great respect for the ways in which journalists have collaborated, sought out the truth of situations, connected the dots, used their social power across various parts of society to connect and convey important messages, and mostly used their media power to amplify issues and voices, was aired. It was an important consideration to bring into the discussion, because while mainstream media continues to struggle with its financial viability and its credibility, the fact is that in a society like South Africa's where many daily problems for average people remain as insurmountable problems, journalists still have a powerful role to play. Chutel emphasized the importance of journalists building relationships of trust with communities by paying closer attention to the issues that matter to them in their everyday lives. She also highlighted how critical self-reflection on the part of journalists could build trust through accountability.

After discussion with delegates in which Prof Nyasha Mboti from UFS, Dr Dinesh Balliah, head of the Wits Journalism Centre, Mr Rod Amner from Rhodes University, Ms Thando Ntunja and former ambassador Barbara Masekela participated, we agreed that journalism is a form of communication with a particular ethos oriented towards citizen empowerment, the transparency and accountability of power (both public and private), and the building of democracy through the empowerment of voices and choices in daily life and politics based on credible, useful information. Although the changes to the media landscape have confronted journalism educators with difficult questions about the future of teaching and learning, in particular how to adapt curricula to remain relevant to both industry and a changing, transforming society, there was agreement that the public importance of Journalism requires educators not to abandon this task but rather redefine and reorient it.

Cognisant of the Constitutional injunction that in addressing the dehumanisation of the past, part of redress is that access to credible, verifiable information is necessary for the dignity and agency of citizens, we believe that Journalism still has a fundamental role to play in this constitutional obligation. We recognise that the mediasphere is complex, multifaceted, and diffused and that the internet supports many forms of communications for a multiplicity of purposes. We recognise that in addressing the shortcomings of our current state of democracy which disproportionately affect the poorest citizens, it is crucial that Journalism works in collaboration with social movement activists, NGOs and other actors for justice to provide the connective tissue across society, and the amplification of voices.

In this time of fracture and upheaval in which it is tempting to embrace an extremely competitive position to "save" the profession of journalism, a better way is to recognise that in this internet era while the profession might be suffering in credibility, trust and functionality, that the values, ethos, and practices of journalism still have great value for citizen empowerment and the building of the particular form of democracy we have chosen as South Africans. The sharing of these values, the orientation towards social justice and the particular skills of verification, critical insight and specialist knowledge, have great value for many forms of communication, both individual and collective, regardless of platform. We are committed to the survival and thriving of these practices because their value to society has been proven, not only in the fight against apartheid but also in our more recent past where predatory actors have tried to destroy our democracy.

MAIN CONFERENCE STREAM 2

Translating voices: Advancing journalism in the digital era

Convener: **Dr Alette Schoon**

Keynote address:

Why should we pay attention to issues of data and AI?

Kavisha Pillay

Founding director of the Campaign On Digital Ethics (CODE)

The aim of this stream was to demystify AI and the datafication of society and the technology that supports it and to discuss concepts and recommendations in plain English. This was achieved over a series of presentations and discussions.

Keynote

The first speaker was Kavisha Pillay from CODE, who examined the critical intersection between technology, democracy and human rights. She focused on how we could protect the integrity of our information ecosystem.

She started by explaining the concept of algorithms and how they have been incorporated into social media platforms to serve up narrow partisan filtered content that match user data such as historical viewing patterns. This results in niche conversations and polarization and allows disinformation to circulate in echo chambers. It therefore fragments and impoverishes democratic deliberation. She drew attention to the global social media platforms that now control public deliberation and the feudal relationship they have with the public, capturing their data like feudal lords used to capture land, referencing a book by David Arditi. She then pointed to the dangers of unregulated AI on the job market, particularly for creatives, with new AI tools like the video creation tool Sora that can produce a video clip through a text prompt that processes data from millions of harvested video clips collected on the internet. This highlights issues of data as a public good and whether a tool built on public data should be owned by private companies. Kavisha reflected on the difficulty of us as South Africans being at the mercy of global corporations whose operations are legitimated by the massive lobbyist groups who influence US policy. Kavisha particularly cautioned journalists to resist any attempts to replace subeditors with AI, since the tools that subeditors bring to newsrooms are not simply automated language tools, but a strong contextual journalistic understanding and skills in fact checking and journalistic mentoring. Kavisha stressed the importance of journalism education in a time of AI and the need to impress on journalism students their role in strengthening democracy. While we need to accept that AI is going to be part of our lives, we need to ensure that journalism survives and that AI is used ethically and responsibly. Kavisha concluded by reminding us to all take a breath and not to panic too much about AI.

The discussion afterwards highlighted some of Emily Benders critique of AI as “stochastic parrots” and emphasized that through breathing we realise that our human ability to experience the world and to have authentic encounters is what makes us different from machines who simply parrot what others have said. Some animated discussion on whether any journalistic jobs that could be successfully replaced by AI, such as community journalism, should actually be retained by humans. The ability of machines to create grammatically correct fluent summaries of content places pressure on journalism schools to produce students who can deliver better quality journalism than AI. In reference to Kate Crawford’s book Atlas AI, which recounts how AI is now used by HR firms to interview people and assess their facial expressions based on training data collected in America, we questioned whether an American smile and an African smile could really be equated. This foregrounds the importance of contextual meaning-making and that statistical understandings of the world have for long been questioned by qualitative researchers.

Panel Discussion 1

Establishing a shared understanding of the challenges of data and AI

Panelists

Prof Susan Brokensha

Co-author of *AI in and for Africa: A Humanistic Perspective*

Mark Weinberg

Free Internet Coalition

Prof Lorenzo Dalvit

School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University

The panel kicked off with Susan Brokensha, who is the co-author of a book focused on Artificial Intelligence in Africa, co-authored with Professor Edwin Coulsen and Doctor Bernard Senekal. She highlighted that their book was published before the development of generative AI, and that it therefore had a somewhat different perspective as it preceded the hyped conversations that emerged after the launch of Chat GPT. She cautioned the audience not to rely too much on the idea of a African policy framework as a solution to regulating AI, as one policy framework could not represent the needs of 54 sovereign nations, 1.4 billion people and 2000 languages. Any AI policy needs to be Africa inclusive and should be based on an ethics of care. Regulation is further complicated by our socio-economic inequalities and the monetization of data. Susan referred to Sam Altman’s Worldcoin bitcoin scheme that paid people to scan their iris data and which was recently banned from operating in Kenya. She stressed that we also need to question assumptions that regulation should align with government policy, as some African countries have authoritarian regimes. Some of the countries who have implemented regulations include

Egypt's national policy on AI and Namibia's Ubuntu Statement on AI. It is important not to adopt regulations too early on so as not to stifle innovation. Susan stressed that although AI is in its infancy in Africa, we are not that behind other countries. Three African countries are ahead in terms of regulation, Mauritius, Egypt and Kenya, with South Africa and Tunisia trying to catch up, according to the Global AI Index. South Africa recently launched the South African Artificial Intelligence Association (SAIA) to advance AI in ethical ways, an organization which includes Tshwane University, University of Johannesburg and Google. It remains to be seen whether AI will be able to mitigate inequalities on our continent or enlarge them. The emergence of AI4Good is an encouraging turn to use AI for development. Susan also considered the challenges for universities posed by AI, such as student assessment and academic authorship.

There was a brief discussion after Susan's presentation, in which some questions were raised in relation to explainable AI. Susan stressed that she was a linguist and not able to comment on the technical understandings of AI, however the tendency towards a black box conceptualization of AI algorithms needed to be challenged. This requires that we develop citizens with a strong knowledge of AI, digital citizens. Students, for example, need to know about the phenomena of "AI hallucination" where programmes like ChatGPT could make up references and material. We discussed a recent incident where AI skin cancer diagnosis algorithm which frequently featured the image of a ruler in the training data actually concluded that a positive diagnosis was likely if there was a ruler present. Such anomalies in the training data could have serious consequences for random incongruous elements in an algorithm, and highlights the need for transparency in explaining how AI and their algorithms work. In future visa applications, security clearances and job applications could all rely on AI.

The next speaker in our panel, Mark Weinberg, is an activist for Friends of the Free Internet, an organization that campaigns for access to the internet as a basic right and service. Mark highlighted the potential of the internet to transform the lives of poor people and the need to wrest it from corporate control. Friends of the Free Internet believe the problems we see now with social media platforms are not inherent in the technology, they are questions of power, ownership and control. We need to examine who does the labour, who produces the data and who appropriates such data and sets the agenda of the algorithms. The problem is that corporations are developing algorithms to extract profit and exert surveillance and control, while the data is developed by citizens without remuneration. The democratic ideals of the early internet were destroyed when venture capitalism got involved and created highly commercialized walled gardens.

Mark questioned the calls for regulation promoted by the other speakers, since he argued the innovations are so rapid that regulation simply cannot catch up. He pointed to regulations that allowed masses of people to get connected to phone infrastructure in the nineties, but saw most of them disconnected three months later due to non-payment. Their campaign is therefore focused on affordability and their flagship project is called Stop Thief and targeted at the exorbitant data costs of cellphone providers and the massive gaps in charges between connectivity for the poor, who purchase data at a high rate in small amounts, versus the discounts for large data bundles and postpaid contracts which can only be afforded by the wealthy. Mark pointed out that there was indeed regulation that applied to these service providers that requires them to cover 97% of the country with network within 5 years, that require they connect to 30 000 government buildings and all schools and clinics with high speed broadband. However, every five year period these service providers have chosen to rather pay the fine than comply with the regulations. Their organisation has therefore concluded that regulation has failed and that it is up to citizens to hold these companies accountable. Their organization intends to make the internet free for everyone and to promote free and open source software. Mark questioned the merit of any regulated protection for journalism, given the role mainstream media continues to play to reinforce dominant narratives and what this might mean for press freedom. Instead he calls for the democratic ownership of media platforms which would enable all citizens to produce media.

Lorenzo Dalvit replied to the other two members of the panel by providing a sense of the present-day realities of ordinary South Africans. He used an example of a hypothetical rural woman, Pinky, to show how developmental discourse around digital e-government is fraught with hypocrisy and contradictions. He told a story to show how a woman's attempts to register her small business with SARS so that she could apply for government contracts, did not necessarily achieve the intended and promoted benefits of digital inclusion. Such benefits of e-governance are widely touted and include the convenience of not needing to travel, time savings due to not queuing in government queues, increased digital literacy to use such apps and resulting accurate data gathering of the South African population. Instead, the hypothetical Pinky had to travel to a distant internet café, stand in a queue until she was eventually assisted by a data clerk who did not explain the software

to her, but dutifully entered - not Pinky's real address, but that of her aunt who lived in a nearby city - since rural areas do not valid actual addresses. Not only was this process of forcing digital inclusion on Pinky much more arduous than standing in a government office queue in her own village, but it also resulted in incorrect data which would go on to be used to make future infrastructural decisions. Lorenzo asked us to consider this parable in terms of three paradoxes: access, coloniality and datafication. Firstly the paradox of access is that people have no choice but to accept digital systems even if these harvest their data. Secondly, for marginalized rural Black South Africans who do not have access to internet infrastructure, digital skills or English, this foregrounds the paradox of coloniality: the huge effort she needs to make to be included in digital networks needs to be understood as an act of violence. Such violence is also inherent in the third paradox, that of datafication and of marginalized rural Black South African having to explain the self in order to become data, and finding that it is impossible not only to capture the information about an address, but also any sense of oneself as a complex person, so that one renders oneself a stereotype. The most problematic aspect of the story is that Terms and Conditions demand that we trust a platform, but that platform's power is not held in check. The problem is that all power is suspect, even that of regulators.

The discussion focused on the importance not just of access to the internet but of digital literacy, which will also make us less reliant on regulation. We also discussed government internet shutdowns and the solutions to mitigate those.

Panel discussion

Transforming journalism in a time of AI and datafication

Panelists

Maarit Jaakkola

Editor of Reporting on Artificial Intelligence: A Handbook for Journalism Educators

Jean le Roux

The Atlantic Council

The next panel focused on AI and Journalism. Prof Maarit Juukulla focused on a survey with journalism educators in the Nordic countries which investigated how AI is used in journalism education. She also introduced her new book, an edited collection on how to report on AI and to avoid simply replicating doomsday myths about AI from popular culture. Much of the book focuses on ethics and AI reporting. She highlighted how the Finnish broadcaster was using AI audio translations to dub voices into Finnish, but clearly marked this as synthetic voices to do so ethically. Maarit identified three types of AI literacy which included general AI literacy for people to live their lives as citizens, professional AI literacy for journalism and journalism education which included the skills to understand datasets. Finally academic AI literacy is being introduced in all practices in the university such as writing assistance, editing, peer review, content curation and data analysis. She stressed that education should follow the industry, not be identical to the industry. There is also a need to examine our industry and how they use AI in reporting, but we need to remain critical. In teaching journalism students they need to examine structures and practices and to embrace lifelong learning. There are limited initiatives for teaching AI in reporting and Nordic educators emphasise the need for training in prompting. Swedish schools are introducing an AI course in schools. Maarit concluded by emphasizing that we should not be taken in by the hype around AI, there is still a need for good journalism.

Next Jean le Roux spoke about his research at the Digital Forensic Research Lab centred on disinformation, digital propaganda and online influence operations. He focused on how the hardware technology that empowers AI has become increasingly powerful making it accessible to many more people. Jean explained that in 2022 we generated 97 zeta bytes of data, and in 2023 120 zeta bytes. An analogy to help us visualize the scale would be that if a byte of data representing an alphabet letter could be symbolized by one grain of rice, it would mean a megabyte would be eight big 2kg bags of rice, while a zettabyte would then be represented by the Pacific Ocean filled with rice. It's so much data that these massive databases need to be organized and classified by AI as the task is too big for human beings. Training data for AI often comes from the data created by photographers, artists and writers.

Open source AI models have become much more commonly available, and where before people needed specialized software and massive computers and graphics cards, now deepfakes can be created through a simple text prompt on a web browser. AI has been used in Germany to create threatening images of foreigners harassing women to create the impression that they are a threat. AI image technology is rapidly transforming and we no longer see errors in the number of fingers like we used to. It affects the credibility of everything. AI software might have safeguards built in, but one can now download these tools and if you have coding skills you could remove the inbuilt safety features that blocks violent images and hatespeech. Text and audio generation are relatively recent innovations while images and videos have been around for a year or so already, mainly used to create pornographic deepfakes. A pornographic forum to create deepfakes was shut down last year because of allegations that they were using child exploited material to train their models.

Some of the AI terminology one should know is for example in video, that of motion order translation which is evident in the ability to match movements. AI often cannot match

gestures or clone a voice at the same time as generate video, therefore sync is often a problem. It also struggles with accents. A classic misinformation example that emerged was in India a few years back, when a Hindi politician's voice was used to produce an English deepfake. Jean's organization analysed the deepfake video and compared it with its source using overlay filters to show how the pixels differed, demonstrating how closely the deepfake represented the original except in the mouth area, which was AI generated. Now with the launch of the Openeye video prompt tool deepfakes have become a lot easier to make. Another disinformation example from back in 2021 was when Dutch politicians were tricked by someone who claimed to be Leonid Volkov a collaborator of the deceased Alex Navalny, who asked to address the Dutch parliament. The online video of him soon started showing strange behaviour and they were convinced this was a deepfake, but it was revealed to simply be a Russian prankster dressed up to resemble him. However deepfake images are becoming easier to generate and a GAN generated image can easily change a grumpy photo of yourself to a smiling version. What makes AI generated disinformation even more worrying is that even the most advanced tools cannot detect AI most of the time.

The final speaker of the day was professor Musa Ndlovu who discussed his work interviewing South African journalists about their perceptions and usage of AI. He was interested whether they saw AI as increasing social inequality. For the study he and the PhD student working with him conducted 17 interviews with senior journalists across all forms of media. They used two theories: one being the technology acceptance model from information system and the other the idea of the public sphere and whether journalists using AI could create stories that would better serve the public sphere. Generally the data revealed that journalists find AI as intruding into their personal lives, as inevitable, something they have no power over, something that overwhelms what they do. However actual AI usage was very much in its infancy and could be characterized as in a development phase. There was much concern around the ethics of using AI and the possibility of fabrication of facts.

In the discussion afterwards Maarit suggested we evaluate AI journalism education the same way we evaluate journalism education, through its ability to create a relationship with the profession, a relationship to technologies a relationship to language and linguistic expression and other kinds of aesthetic expressions and a relationship to reality and the social world and a relationship to oneself. Jean commented on the rise of audio deepfakes and the threat of disinformation stemming from cloning voices and sharing these on WhatsApp voicenotes. Contextual clues can sometimes reveal AI images, such as a female police officer's hat on a male police officer, but there are no such easily spotted clues in audio deepfakes. Musa highlighted how SABC journalists were particularly wary of deepfakes as many of them have been deepfaked to promote bitcoin sales in videos claiming they were working with Elon Musk.

We concluded with a discussion about the need to get access to data as academics and as journalists.

MAIN CONFERENCE STREAM 3

Charting a course: reregulation and funding futures in the media

Convener: Dr Taryn De Vega

Session 1

Reregulation – the future and sustainability of the South African media

Panelists

Mr Sbu Ngalwa
Chairperson SANEF

Ms Uyanda Siyotula
SOS National Coordinator

Prof Guy Berger
Distinguished Fellow, Research ICT Africa

Ms ShoeShoe Qhu
CEO of MDDA

Dr Matolwandile Mtotywa
RU Business School

Mr Thabang Moleko
RU Business School

Journalists, members of civil society, statutory representatives, researchers, and journalism educators gathered at the Summit to deliberate about the regulation and sustainability of the media and its future. The gathering reflected on two key areas related to a digitally altering media environment: 1. issues of financial viability and the sustainability of the press, and 2. issues of media regulation and regulatory oversight of traditional, online and social media.

The presentations were supported and furthered by the participants and thought leaders in the stream plenary discussion.

The stream recommended that the future of the media be informed by the commitment to constitutional principles which support a sustainable media ecosystem in which credible news journalism can serve the needs of a democratic South Africa and its citizens. This public-centred approach permeated the deliberations of the day, with speakers affirming the need for financial and regulatory frameworks which fulfil a public service and support democracy. The stream iterated that financial sustainability and regulatory oversight should promote public interest journalism, which aligns with the public good. It emphasises the importance of regulation in the public interest, which upholds freedoms of expression and is developed through deliberative participation, emerging through the relevant fair and transparency legislation processes.

The stream advanced discussions on the current state of regulation, sustainability and the future of the media, and proposed a set of principles which should inform the future of regulation and sustainability in the digital age. The principles are outlined below:

1. Public service media, democracy and universal access

- The provision and access to news should be a human right.
- A public service media regulatory framework is needed to support democracy.
- News consumers should be able to choose their news feeds and not be subject to only content ranking that is determined by corporate attention-driven algorithms.

2. Public interest, sustainability, and media funding models

- The media needs a mixed funding model, drawing on multiple funding sources alongside income-generating activities, such as citizen funding, crowdfunding, and other means.
- Compensation and big tech: fair compensation for credible media organisations¹ and journalists through the taxation of big tech and online platforms. Fair compensation for news should be based on the value the platforms derive from the content, channelling tax revenue through an independently governed funding entity for public interest media.
- Financing the future by developing an independent Public Interest Journalism fund with multiple sources of revenue, including business, philanthropy, the state, taxation and other sources. The fund will allow society to acknowledge the importance of journalism and to fund the sustaining of journalism in the public interest.

3. Regulation in the digital age

- Content self-regulatory bodies should consider a joint approach to ethical codes of conduct and public complaints mechanisms to regulate credible news and other content production across all online, print and broadcast media.
- Regulatory guidelines must be developed on the core principles of AI usage for journalism and storytelling.
- Regulators should be independent and include a range of regulatory forms to respond to the multi-media converged digital environment.
- Consideration could be given to linking up the current complaint mechanisms that serve news media with those operated by social media institutions, while keeping in

Session 2

Reregulation and the digital future of the media

Panelists

Prof Guy Berger
Distinguished Fellow, Research ICT Africa

Prof Sisanda Nkoala
Press Council Public Representative

Ms Nomshado Lubisi-Nkosinkulu
Media Monitoring Africa Manager

Mr Michael Markovitz
GIBS Media Leadership Think Tank

¹ Credible news should refer to those who subscribe to the regulatory media council and adhere to ethical codes of conduct.

mind the difference in content standards between the two sectors, in order to increase cost-effectiveness and serve the public through a one-stop complaints resolution body.

4. *Broadcast regulations should be updated to be fit for purpose*

- Responding to the need for broadcast and public broadcasting regulation and policy, which is severely outdated, there is a need to review and update the outdated regulation/legislation on broadcast to support and respond to the evolving electronic, digital and online environment.

5. *Regulating internet platforms*

- A specific focus on internet platforms and their regulatory oversight is needed
- Regulation should allow for decentralised regulatory systems to respond to online and social media oversight; for example, platform oversight should extend to oversight of risk assessment/mitigation and reporting on/accounting for it.
- Tech platforms should join the local self-regulatory bodies, pay the levee and adhere to the agreed code of conduct.

6. *Data and transparency*

- Transparency of algorithms is needed to support the sharing of data related to news content. Access to the data should be granted to publishers to allow media organisations to further promote and optimise content.

7. *Mapping of the regulatory landscape*

- Regulatory design should be fit for purpose and informed by research on the regulatory landscape.
- Regulation should consider the needs for content, structure and other regulatory matters.

8. *Research on the regulatory landscape*

- Research on regulation, sustainability and media funding should be encouraged.
- Developing or collaborating with a research institute to educate media and the public about online migration, regulation and sustainability should be promoted.
- Diffusion of research should be embedded to support the education of the media, community media and others on accessing information and navigating online production and audiences.

Media and governance literacy

- Literacy should be developed about the governance of the communications environment and how power should be rearranged to favour journalism as a core element of integrity in the information environment.

MAIN CONFERENCE STREAM 4

In the eye of the Storm: Going Beyond the Headlines to Heal Trauma, PTSD, and pain in Journalism

Convener: **Thandeka Gqubule-Mbeki**

Speakers and panelists:

Mr Hopewell Chin'ono

Television journalist, News Producer and Documentary Film Maker

Prof Liesel Jacobs

HoD Psychology, Rhodes University

Dr Trust Kabungaidze

Deputy HoD Psychology, Rhodes University

Mr Fareed Taamallah

Freelance Journalist and farmer, Ramallah

Ms Nichola Anyuor

Rongo University, Kenya

Ms Yusuf Ada Nurat Tosin

University of Abuja, Nigeria

Mr Dickson Ogunkuhle

Christian University, Uganda

Professor Bruce Shapiro

DART Centre for Journalism and Trauma at Columbia University

The existence of communities of practice in journalism that have been subjected to periods and moments of sustained trauma and conflict on the African continent and in our country, necessitated a discussion on trauma during the conference. Journalists from Northern Nigeria who had covered the insurgency of Boko Haram presented at the conference led by Ms Yusuf Ada Nurat Tosin. It emerged that journalists in Northern Nigeria were subjected to years of heightened trauma and violence and many lost their lives. The insurgency in the North of Mali due to Tuareg military action has caused strife, trauma and grief for journalists in this region of Africa. Accordingly, ECOWAS, the regional cooperation body of West African states has developed a regional, international body on the safety of journalists – fortified by a court mechanism under ECOWAS. This report from West Africa presented findings in media assessments that indicated that events have left a deep information gap between the North and South in West Africa, with the North being information poor due to military and armed conflict in the Northern regions of West Africa. The conference also heard of how journalists were evacuated from the North, leading to a news blackout in the afflicted regions. The conclusion reached in the discussions is that the conflicts had succeeded in stalling media development, press freedom and freedom of expression in the Northern regions of West Africa.

The problems in the region can be described as:

- a. Problems of access to information as media houses have been shut down and insurgency groups have taken control of information flow.
- b. Information quality: the Northern Media outlets that remain are unable to collect and report verified information due to infrastructure problems and the disruption of the war of the North.
- c. Working conditions and the safety of journalists; journalists have been killed, physically attacked, coerced, threatened, and had their equipment confiscated, they have also been abducted and kidnapped. This is compounded by the fact that local country media regulatory bodies have collapsed.

In East Africa we heard of the impoverishment of journalists by deferred payments, delayed payments which leads to stress, trauma, corruption, and the degradation of the standing of the media. The presentation was given by Mr. Nicholas Anyuor, presented a desperate multi-faceted crisis of financial sustainability of the media in Kenya. Due to the collapse of the advertising-industrial model of the media and the dire economic circumstances of the media in Kenya, journalists, struggled to get remuneration. Such paid delays, lead to content distortion. Bias and corruption creep in due to the financial vulnerability of journalists as politicians' step in to pervert the system of media production by paying journalists themselves. This leads to a crisis of trust in the East African media as Kenya is the epicentre of media in East Africa. We were informed of collective solutions and social clubs that journalists have formed to assist each other during this time of trial.

DART Centre, Columbia University

A presentation from the DART Centre for Journalism and Trauma at Columbia University was delivered by Professor Bruce Shapiro. The DART Centre for Journalism and Trauma is a resource centre and a resource centre for journalists who cover violence, conflict, and tragedy around the world. It is a project of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism in New York. The DART centre also operates a DART Centre in Europe based in London, as well as a DART Centre for Asia Pacific based in Melbourne Australia, and a research node in South America. The DART Centre is yet to establish a presence in Africa and Rhodes University's School of Journalism and Media Studies is set to undertake negotiations concerning situating a DART Centre in our SPI (Sol Plaatjie Institute for Media Management).

JMS has also taken note of the DART Centre Ochberg Fellowship which offers opportunities to journalists who want to deepen their knowledge of emotional trauma and improve coverage of violence, conflict, and tragedy. JMS is set to ensure that its own graduate students and alumni apply to avail themselves of the opportunities presented herein.

Further, a recommendation that all regions of Africa adopt the violation reporting mechanism for journalist that have been implemented in the ECOWAS region. This recommendation must be put through to the African Union and the South African authorities who lead SADAC as soon as the new administration in the country has been duly inaugurated. This must be done in the process of popularising the Makhanda Declaration by the leadership of JMS.

MAKHANDA

DRAFT



*The Rhodes University Journalism Summit 2024, with its theme **Seeds of change; cultivating the future of journalism in Africa**, deliberated for three days on the evolving life of journalism in the digital era.*

dec

The summit reiterated that journalism is a form of communication with a particular ethos oriented towards citizen empowerment, the transparency and accountability of power (both public and private) and the building of democracy.

The summit believes that it is important to provide all people with accurate information to address past injustices and restore dignity and empowerment to citizens. We believe that Journalism is essential in fulfilling this duty.

The summit recognised that in addressing the dehumanisation of the past, part of redress is that access to credible, verifiable information is necessary for the dignity and agency of citizens, we believe that Journalism still has a fundamental role to play in this constitutional obligation.

Therefore, the summit drew up a declaration covering the life and changing times of journalism and declared the following:

la ra tion

MAKING JOURNALISM AFFORDABLE

1 JOURNALISM AS A PUBLIC GOOD

We believe journalism and news in particular, is a public good and human right. We believe that journalism is a set of practices, values and ethics of society, which includes government, business and civil society, which we must invest in. Journalism has a future in the digital age and we believe it is central to democracy and the sustainable development of democracy and the public good. We demand that access to news and journalism be recognised as a fundamental right.

2 INTERNET ACCESS

Internet access is a public good and human right. We stand against digital inequality and injustice. Internet access must be universal. Data costs must be accessible to all citizens. Government, legislatures, and regulators must act now to ensure that data prices are fair.

South African citizens need affordable access to the internet. It is imperative that the internet be considered a public good, and the control of access and the setting of prices be removed from the private companies who control this access.

We call for transparency of algorithms and we demand explainable AI. We recognise that algorithms and platform terms and conditions vary according to geolocation and therefore we call on the African Union to assist in the documentation and the study of a continental understanding of these platform logics. We encourage newsrooms to develop beats around algorithmic abuse and unfettered data mining.

3 SUSTAINABILITY OF JOURNALISM

We believe in the constitutional principles which support a sustainable media ecosystem in which credible news journalism can serve the needs of a democratic South Africa and its citizens. We affirm our commitment to regulation, sustainability and the future of the media. We encourage innovation in the quest for new funding models in order to ensure that media is sustainable in the digital era. Sustainability should extend to:

- Fair compensation for credible media organisations and journalists through the taxation of big tech and online platforms. Fair compensation for news should be based on the value the platforms derive from the content, channelling tax revenue through an independently governed funding entity for public interest media.
- Developing a Public Interest Journalism fund with multiple sources of revenue.

4 TAXATION OF BIG TECH

We believe it is time to establish a fair taxation standard for digital platforms in South Africa and on the African continent. We call for the formation of a multi-stakeholder body to work out the modalities and structure of a fair digital economy tax. Further we call on the African Union to require member states to adhere to a set of guidelines on fair taxation of digital platforms in the public interest. We require that at least 20% of taxes raised in this way should be dedicated to a public media fund that supports the strengthening of indigenous language media in this country, which includes research.

5 COMMUNITY MEDIA

We believe that community media plays a crucial role in enabling a plurality of voices in our society. It also plays a role

in building a civil society that can hold the powerful to account at all levels of society. It plays a particular role in our country particularly in relation to building social cohesion. We call for increased direct funding.

6 MULTILINGUALISM

We believe in a culture of multilingualism. We believe that African indigenous languages give us insight into all these cultural worlds and are part of the unique wealth of our continent. We endorse section 6 of the SA Constitution that implores all public bodies to support all marginalised and endangered indigenous languages. We resolve to hold accountable the Public Broadcaster, which has a mandate of language preservation and PANSALB to implement its language mandate. We commit ourselves to the growth of media in indigenous languages and to multilingualism in general.

7 PUBLIC BROADCASTING

It is imperative that the public broadcaster with its television channels and radio stations in indigenous languages be properly managed, accountable to a functioning parliamentary committee, and properly funded by the taxes of South Africans.

Responding to the need for broadcast and public broadcasting regulation and policy, which is severely outdated. There is a need to review and update the legislation on broadcast to support and respond to the evolving electronic, digital and online environment.

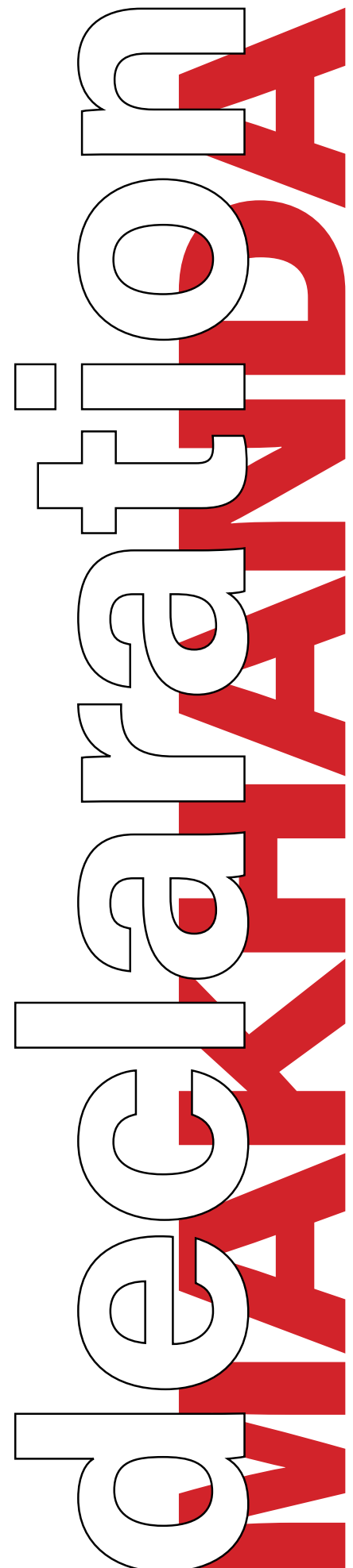
8 EDUCATION

We need to nurture the journalists of the future. This includes journalists in schools and student journalists in higher education. We believe that student journalists are journalists. We call for basic education and higher education policy to recognise and protect this and for universities to develop policy that explicitly protects student journalists to do the work they are supposed to do. As journalism teachers we commit to support campaigns to support the student media and to the development of journalism in schools.

We affirm the role and value of our journalism trainers and education organisations to develop a new generation of principled and ethical journalists and media creators. We need to recognise the role of these trainers and organisations. We are working in an ever changing environment and that requires us to be in constant conversation and in support of each other. We will work towards the establishment of a network to share knowledge and ideas towards the invention and constant development of a relevant and sustainable curriculum and a future for our young people within the profession. We need our journalism industry leaders and government agencies to commit to supporting journalism education institutions. This by assisting with the placement of students. We hope to work together to theorise the media space and engage SETAs around providing adequate funding to train the new generation of journalists.

9 REGULATION

We value regulation in the public interest, which upholds freedoms of expression and is developed through deliberative participation, emerging through the relevant, fair and transparent legislation processes. We commit to regulation in the digital age to support the regulation and monitoring of converged media and its distribution on online platforms. Self-



ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS

regulatory bodies should consider a joint approach to ethical codes of conduct to support credible journalism production across all media for online, digital, print, broadcast and internet technologies. We call for specific focus on platform regulation and on internet platforms and their regulatory oversight, which is needed.

10 ATTACKS ON AND KILLING OF JOURNALISTS

We decry the deaths and attacks of hundreds of journalists that have been witnessed in the last two years. We believe that given the role that journalists play in democracy, the public and the private sector and the state have a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of journalists. Journalists suffer a great deal of trauma because of their exposure to human tragedy, war and conflict. Attacks on journalists have also increased, including jailings, killings and digital harassment. We call on governments and the AU to:

1. Create a mechanism/authority that is responsible for the protection of journalists in each state, and
2. Release all journalists held in jail on our continent.

We call on academic institutions to collaborate on curricula that highlight coverage of violence, war and social conflict that are trauma aware and that prepare journalists for the contexts in which they will be reporting.

We encourage the adoption of the Ghanaian Model.

11 STUDENT MEDIA

We believe in the historical value of the student media and we call on university authorities to respect its independence. All rights that apply to the media should apply to the student press. We call on universities, the private sector and the government to ensure funding to ensure their survival. We call for the establishment of an independent national student press council. And that adequate funds are made available for the sustainability thereof. We encourage school and student journalists to adopt the press code and the code of ethics. We call all institutions and places of learning to ensure policy that protects journalistic work.

IN CONCLUSION

- We are committed to the survival and thriving of journalism and its contribution to democracy and its value to society.
- We recognise that the mediasphere is complex, multifaceted, and diffused and that journalism supports many forms of communications for a multiplicity of purposes.
- We call on civil society, educators, big tech companies, the government and society at large to recognize that journalism will always be relevant and the truth will never be obsolete, and that journalism will always be of paramount importance regardless of the publishing platform, be that print, broadcast, digital or otherwise.
- The dissemination of news must recognise partnerships and collaboration.
- We must work together to protect journalism's value to society.

MEMORIAL WALK

At the end of the Pre-conference sessions delegates gathered at the front steps of the Africa Media Matrix to walk from the School of Journalism and Media studies to the Biosciences Lecture Theatre, in memory of, and in mourning for all of the many journalists that we have lost to conflict, and we walk for the journalists who continue to work in situations of trauma. The Geneva convention states that journalists must be treated as civilians and protected as such. The United Nations Security Council has resolved that all parties in armed conflict have the obligation to respect media workers and protect them against all forms of violence. The UN General Assembly urges its member states to work together to prevent violence against journalists. And yet, across the world, journalists risk their lives on a daily basis, both in situations of war and in the more everyday situations of conflict in society. When they set out to reveal wrongdoing, people in positions of power oppose them. Politicians, business leaders and leaders of crime syndicates attack them in order to silence them. And all too often this results in the death of our brothers and sisters, many of whose names were placed on the ticker tape that runs around the Africa Media Matrix Building.



SUMMIT OPENING

Delegates were welcomed to the Summit by the Head of the School of Journalism and Media studies, Jeanne du Toit, who explained the genesis of the summit. The idea for this Journalism Summit was born at a press conference hosted by Vice Chancellor, Professor Sizwe Mabizela, where the journalists in attendance began to speak about the challenges they face in sustaining good journalism. They said that universities have failed to draw attention to these challenges, or to support journalists in overcoming them. In response he promised that Rhodes University would host a conference where journalists and academics from across South Africa could come together to forge a new path for journalism in this country.

The opening of this event was attended by journalism academics and the broader journalistic community, from the newsroom of corporate media based in big cities to small community-based newspapers and radio stations from rural South Africa. There were journalists working for student media and for large professional enterprises, and entrepreneurs and freelancers. Civil society organisations and activist groups were also represented. There were politicians, policy-makers, funders, members of regulatory bodies and representatives of religious organisations. There were postgraduate researchers and undergraduate students. Ultimately, the aim of the Summit was to identify strategies and solutions that we can pursue, as a diverse community with a shared commitment to journalism that matters.

We were launched into this task with an opening keynote address by Judge Kathleen Satchwell (retired Judge of the High Court of South Africa) who spoke of her work defending individuals and organisations against efforts to silence them by South Africa's Apartheid regime. Delegates also watched a sobering video of Palestinian journalist Fareed Taamallah from Ramallah, describing the harrowing conditions that journalists have to work under. Taamallah sent us a video presentation as he was unable to travel here and the internet is too unreliable to allow for live video feed.



Opening keynote speaker Judge Kathy Satchwell



Ambassador Barbara Masekela (right) with Prof Siphokazi Magadla. (Photos: Shepi Mati)

SOCIAL EVENTS

Gala dinner

Rhodes University traditionally hosts a dinner to celebrate the Honorary Doctorates being honoured at the various graduation ceremonies. This year, the university also hosted the Summit delegates to celebrate the gathering too.



Prof Sizwe Mabizela and Thandeka Gqubule-Mbeki



Ambassador Barbara Masekela with two of the student volunteers



Delegates from the student media pre-conference





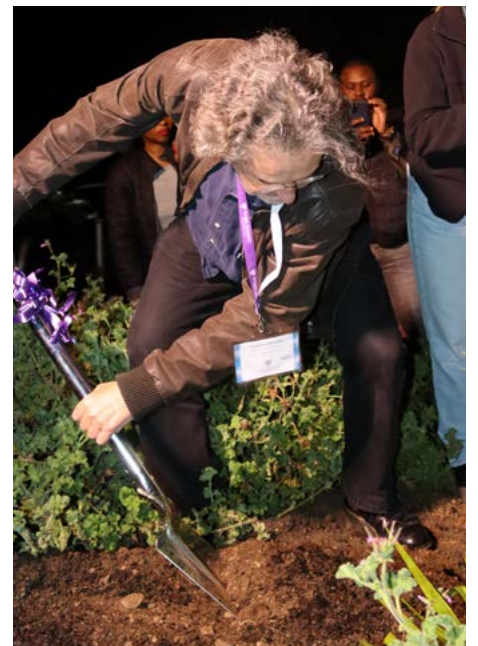
Siyabonga Jabavu and Yolisa Jabavu-Ndhlovu before the planting the aloe in honour of the work of their great, great, great, great Grandfather, JT Jabavu

Jollof & Jabavu

On the final evening of the Summit, the School hosted an evening to celebrate the life and work of JT Jabavu who among other achievements founded the first Black newspaper in South Africa – *Imvo Zabantsundu: Native Opinion*. The paper was founded 140 years ago in 1884 and we celebrated this together with Yolisa Jabavu-Ndhlovu and Siyabonga Jabavu (JT Jabavu’s great, great, great, great grandchildren) by planting an aloe in the garden in front of the AMM. The aloe is a hardy and tenacious plant native to the Eastern Cape and is a fitting symbol of the longevity and importance of the legacy of JT Jabavu and his work. And the celebration of JT and his family and his legacy was accompanied by a delicious Ghanaian Jollof provided by Paulina Quartey – one of the many student volunteers for the Summit.



Anton Harber, Kerry Lanaghan, Yolisa Jabavu-Ndhlovu Jeanne du Toit and Siyabonga Jabavu looking pleased with themselves, having successfully planted the aloe



Anton Harber really taking seriously the planting of that aloe




Speakers Thandeka Gqubule-Mbeki, Anthea Garman and Taryn De Vega honouring the work of JT Jabavu

How to steal a country

The Jollof and Jabavu evening was followed by a screening of the movie *How to Steal a Country*. Dr Alette Schoon organised that the screening be followed by a discussion with the director, Rehad Desai.

SCREENING AT THE JOURNALISM SUMMIT

**HOW TO
STEAL
A COUNTRY** 

A film by Rehad Desai

“Shame is for sissies”

DIRECTORS: REHAD DESAI, MARK KAPLAN
 PRODUCERS: ZIVIA DESAI, ANITA KHANNA, REHAD DESAI
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: MICHAEL AURET, SPIER FILMS
 CO-PRODUCERS: MA, JA, DE FILMPRODUKTIONS; HUMMELFILM; STORYHOUSE FILM
 DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: NIC HOFMEYR
 EDITORS: MEGAN GILL, GEERT VEUSKENS
 MUSIC COMPOSER: JANNOUS AUKEMA
 DESIGNER: THOMAS BLATCHER

www.howtostealacountry.uhuru.digital

SCREENING FOLLOWED BY Q&A WITH THE DIRECTOR
AMM BUILDING, PRINCE ALFRED STREET
FRIDAY 5 APRIL • 20:00 • ROOM 202

PUBLICITY AND SOCIAL MEDIA COVERAGE

Media Coverage

The summit's coverage was wide and adequate, particularly for panel discussions. Key events were live-streamed, making critical discussions accessible to all registered participants. Both pre-conference and summit streams on April 4 and 5 saw significant attendance in both physical and virtual formats. Events such as the 'Jolof and Jabavu night', the 'March for Journalists', and the screening of "How to Steal a Country" were predominantly covered by student volunteers who played a crucial role in capturing and posting content. Publicity was largely managed by staff and students of JMS with support from the Communications and Advancement Division.

Social Media Activity

Social media played an essential role in the summit's outreach, though it faced some logistical challenges. Volunteers mostly gathered photos and quotes, which were then shared on platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. However, the lack of direct access to these platforms caused delays in posting. This is mainly because the summit coincided with Graduation week and vacation term break, limiting the availability of key participants who would typically manage real-time social media updates. Despite this, after the event concluded, comprehensive posts were made across all relevant platforms:

- Twitter: Continues to post quotes from the event.
- Instagram: Focused on reposting event pictures, videos, and quotes from the speakers.
- Facebook: Followed a similar strategy to Instagram.
- LinkedIn: Frequently updated, although details on the Makhanda Declaration were not posted.

Pre-Summit Publicity

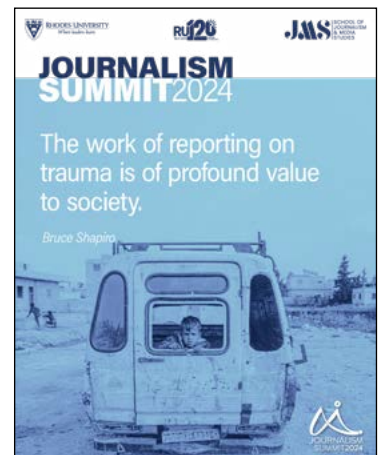
Before the summit, extensive publicity efforts included updated posters, adverts, and notices. These were widely shared and linked to a live website created specifically for the summit. This pre-event promotion successfully generated awareness and facilitated access to live streams as well as assistance with registration and information relevant for the event.

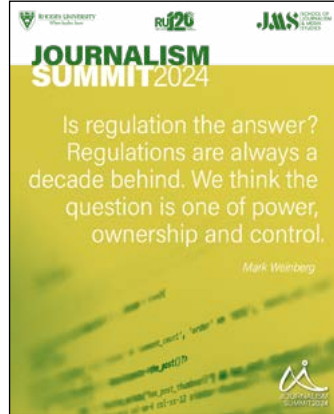
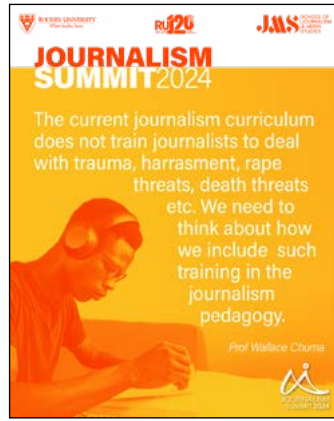
Recommendations for Future Events

For future summits, early and thorough planning is essential to ensure adequate assistance with publicity during the event. While the present volunteers did an excellent job, more hands and better preparation could enhance live coverage. Ensuring direct access to social media platforms for real-time updates would also avoid delays and improve the reach and engagement of the event's content. Overall, the Journalism Summit achieved significant media and social media coverage despite some logistical challenges. With improved planning and resource allocation, future events can leverage these insights to maximise live coverage and engagement, further amplifying their impact.

Summit logo

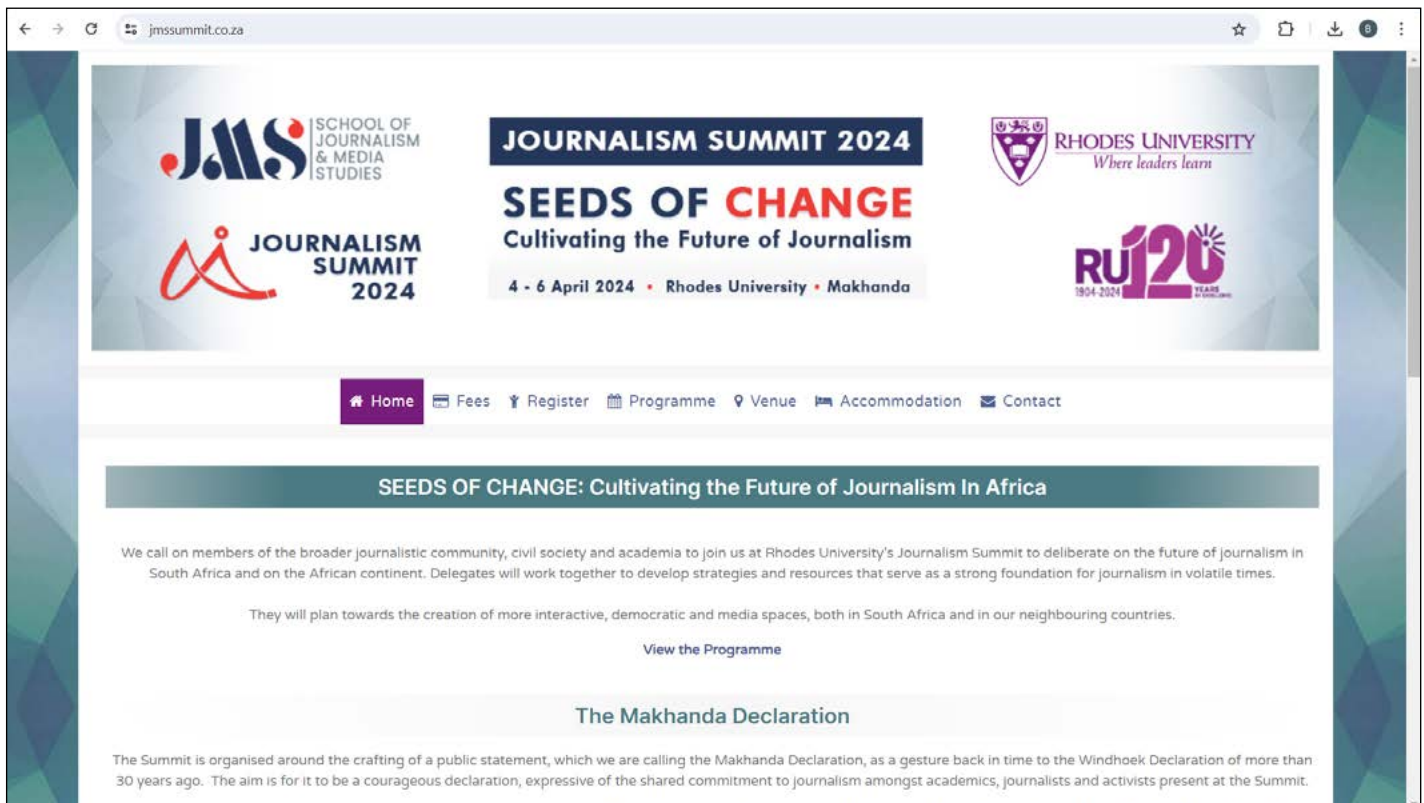
As part of the efforts to get the Summit recognised by students and to get them involved, a competition was launched inviting students to submit proposals for a summit. There were over 20 submissions and the final logo choice was that of JMS4 student Mihle Mdashe.





Summit website

The summit website was a major conduit for publicity and information as well as the mechanism through which delegates were able to register for the conference – as either virtual participants or as physical attendees. The site was designed and managed by Stephen Sanchez at Algoa Digital in Port Elizabeth.



RHODES UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
& MEDIA STUDIES

JOURNALISM SUMMIT 2024

SEEDS OF CHANGE
CULTIVATING THE FUTURE
OF JOURNALISM IN AFRICA

4 to 6
APRIL
HYBRID
CONFERENCE



The Summit will help us get to grips with the precarious terrain journalism must both inhabit and report on and explore a new path for journalism in South Africa and beyond. Many aspects of the contemporary world threaten the future of journalism and its contribution to democracy. The advent of factors that place us in a post-truth world; the rapid infiltration of AI; monopolistic nature of the media; a decline in a belief in the independence of the media; digital attacks on free speech; harassment and killing of journalists and truth-tellers; check-book journalism; the commodification of the news; and the rapid advancement of digital technologies for content production and manipulation provoke the fundamental question: "How can journalism fulfil its crucial social and democratic role in our age and at this time?"

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The Summit programme will consist of two major sections – a pre-conference dealing with journalism education and student media and the main summit dealing with journalism and democracy, trauma, regulation and funding and digital journalism.

Registration

Venue: AMM Foyer

Wednesday – 14:00 – 18:00

Thursday – 08:00 – 12:00

Thursday 4 April – Pre-conference streams and Summit opening

Past, present and future of socially responsive journalism education in South Africa.

Conveners: Dr Jeanne du Toit and Dr Quatro Mgogo

Shaping Africa's narrative: Harnessing student media to redefine African storytelling.

Convener: Ms Kerry Lanaghan

Memorial walk

Delegates will walk with members of Civil Society to honour and remember journalists who have, and continue to, face harassment, imprisonment and death in the course of doing their jobs.

Journalism Summit opening and introductions

Gala Dinner

Dinner, hosted by Rhodes University, with Honorary Doctorate awardees

Friday 5 April – Summit streams

Journalism as a public good: revisiting the ethos of journalism

Convener: Prof Anthea Garman

Translating voices, advancing journalism in the digital era

Convener: Dr Alette Schoon

Charting a course: Reregulation and funding futures in the media

Convener: Taryn de Vega

In the eye of the storm: Going beyond the headlines to heal trauma, PTSD and pain in journalism

Convener: Ms Thandeka Gqubule-Mbeki

Brown Bag Dinner

Jabavu and Jolloff

Keynote speaker: Adv Tembeka Ngcukaitobi

Movie screening

How to Steal a Country

Director: Rehad Desai

Saturday 6 April – Makhanda Declaration discussions

Plenary discussion of Makhanda Declaration

Press conference

ABOUT THE STREAMS

Thursday 4 April Pre-conference:

Shaping Africa's narrative: Harnessing student media to redefine African storytelling.

Convener: Ms Kerry Lanaghan

The Student Media programme aims to confront the issues that students working for student media face. The programme aims to create a space in which support and recognition is offered and resources are shared, while exploring networking opportunities and the ways in which collaboration can contribute to the role that student media plays both locally and globally. The student media has played a vital role in South African history, especially during the apartheid era. Vukani!, The Activist and Checkpoint are only some of the student publications that functioned as the platforms for social justice, activism and dissent. Publications such as these offered a voice to those who were marginalized and challenged oppressive systems, which played a crucial role in the struggle against apartheid. By exploring this history, the programme seeks to remind and inspire students about the power of student media. By drawing lessons from the past, the future of

Thursday 4 April Pre-conference

Past, present and future of socially responsive journalism education in South Africa.

Conveners: Dr Jeanne du Toit and Dr Quatro Mgogo

In this pre-conference we take as our departure point the recognition that journalism education can only serve the public good if it remains responsive, adapting to its changing context. With this principle in mind, we dedicate the day to a conversation about socially responsive journalism education in the South African context. We begin by considering what it would take to rethink the university as a space of learning if it is to nurture critical professionals in this country. We then look back at the thirty years of teaching and learning about journalism that has taken place since the birth of a democratic South Africa. We consider the extent to which we have promoted and enabled journalisms that serve the public good. For example, have we encouraged inclusive and participatory journalism practices that draw on the diversity of languages and cultures in our country? Have we prepared journalists for working with resilience and

our own heritage of locally grounded journalistic practice, such as that of community media and alternative journalism, to achieve these goals? We then turn to the contemporary moment, to identify aspects of our social context that we must engage with as we reinvent journalism. Here we explore the possibility of journalism education that responds holistically to the lived realities of students and journalists in an approach that is informed by an ethics of care. We also deal with the way journalism education must adapt to the radical changes taking place in journalism practice, such as shrinking newsrooms, the increasing complexity of fact checking in a digital world and the emergence of new opportunities for communication practice. Finally, we talk about the work we need to do together as educational institutions in order to prepare our graduates for the future.

Friday 5 April Stream:

Journalism as a public good - revisiting the ethos of journalism

Convener: Prof Anthea Garman

In 1997, the newly-constituted South African National Editors' Forum and the Rhodes journalism department convened a media industry-educators' discussion called "A new paradigm for journalism in South Africa" (see the report at <https://rjr.ru.ac.za/rjrpdf/rjrno15/newparadigm.pdf>). Eager to abandon the form of journalism that had worked so closely with the apartheid state, and led by Joe Thloloe, we described old paradigm features as journalism that had no sensitivity to its African context, that was fragmented into content areas with little sense-making between them, that held onto the idea of being a "mirror" to a fractured society, instead of embracing a much more active role. This was a journalism that was reactive, and held fiercely to "balance" and objectivity in a society that was riven with inequalities along race, class and gender lines. Ownership of the media was in the hands of a few and the feisty independent media were about to die from lack of funding. But we had high hopes of change. We drafted a policy statement that said: "In recognition of our role in society as storytellers; as the link between South African citizens and the world; we strive to promote: Stories, told in a multiplicity of African voices that are well researched; contextualised; analytical; interpretive; in dialogue with, and respectful of an audience that is complex and diverse through media that are owned 1. symbolically the audience and economically by a diverse group of stakeholders, enabled by newsroom structures that empower storytellers." Since then we have not only had to face massive digitisation of newsrooms with attendant loss of jobs, but powerful new competitors for advertising revenue entered into our terrain and changed the shape of communication and news. Maintaining a democracy through the rockiest of political upheavals with a concerted attempt to steal our country's resources and finances and to capture the media was deeply challenging and were saved at the 11th hour by a few journalists who held the line, in the way Maria Ressa urges us to. In 2024 journalism is, to put it mildly, battered. It's time to revisit what we do, how we do it, with what resources and supports and who we do it for. Let's put the ethos or core value of journalism on the agenda for this discussion today. What core value will power the journalism of the future? How can journalism claim its rightful place as a public good? How do we ensure that in a highly stratified and unequal society that our public media provides the very best information in the languages people speak? How do we stop simply holding politicians to account and begin inspiring citizens to be active, involved and have hope that what they do – even in little at local level – will matter?

Friday 5 April Stream:

Translating voices, advancing journalism in the digital era

Convener: Dr Alette Schoon

The AI, Data and Journalism stream is committed to proposing interventions, strategies and solutions that promote journalism for the public good in the context of AI, ubiquitous data and the rise of platformization. These proposals will be made with the understanding that journalism in this country has been embedded in a long history of selective and extractive storytelling where the legacy of apartheid and colonialism has made working conditions for journalists nearly unbearable as they report from the traumatising space of a brutal unequal and violent society. Meanwhile the rush for profits has hollowed out the industry and new platform economies have ripped apart economic models for journalism. This has placed our journalists under increasing and often unimaginable strain. We as journalism educators and leaders have been complicit in our silence. We therefore have a responsibility to unite and find ways to support and decolonize our industry and create an African journalism that is focused on building relationships, solutions, strong institutions, communities and human dignity. We recognize that conversations around technology have often been framed in exclusionary patronizing depoliticized discourses promoting foreign solutions. These have largely ignored and excluded the masses of less-connected people who struggle with limited access to this new shifting digital world. We commit ourselves to grappling with these challenges in an inclusive humanising and accessible manner and to work together to find solutions. Some of the proposals for discussion in our stream are: educating journalists about reporting on and developing new skills in an ecosystem of AI and big data ubiquity in the African context; modifying journalistic ethics codes to champion an ethics of care and protecting the public good in the context of AI and ubiquitous data; developing strategies to come together in interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral teams for lobbying big tech platforms in the service of democracy and journalism for the public good; and developing regulation and policy initiatives for AI and big data that champion the rights of vulnerable people above profits.

Friday 5 April Stream:

Charting a course: Reregulation and funding futures in the media

Convener: Ms Taryn De Vega

Digitalisation and the rise of the internet and online technologies have transformed the media industry. Production, consumption and distribution channels have migrated online, resulting in a new mode of operations for the press. Reregulation and funding futures in the media grapples with the realities of an evolving industry, focusing specifically on the consequences of this evolution for financing, sustainability and regulation in South Africa.

Developing a sustainable ecosystem, in which credible news journalism can serve the needs of a democratic South Africa and its citizens, requires deliberative participation by the media, its audiences, and other stakeholders. Collectively, we reflect on the media and its future. Respecting the role of public interest media, we examine legislation and regulatory policy, prioritising the goal of universal access for all citizens. Valuing the sustainability of the press, we explore funding models for multimedia operations across digital and internet platforms. Recognising the importance of high-quality, ethical journalism, we consider the need for improved accountability systems and responsive regulatory oversight. And acknowledging the developments in AI and social media, we scrutinise digital platform governance and efforts to counter online harm.

Thirty years into democracy, South Africa and its media stand at the precipice of possibility. Journalism and the media must continue to adapt to the changing media landscape, remain responsive to the technological innovations across digital, online, social media and AI technologies, and continue serving the public and its interests through various mediums. This stream draws on this opportunity to think through the digital turn, navigate the industry's responsiveness to ongoing change, and chart a course for

THURSDAY 4 APRIL - PRE-CONFERENCES AND SUMMIT OPENING

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE: SOCIALLY RESPONSIVE JOURNALISM EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA Conveners: Dr Jeanne du Toit and Dr Quatro Mgogo Venue: Fine Art Lecture Theatre		SHAPING AFRICA'S NARRATIVE: HARNESSING THE STUDENT MEDIA TO REDEFINE AFRICAN STORYTELLING Convener: Ms Kerry Lanaghan Venue: Africa Media Matrix, room 202	
This pre-conference will deal with the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role that Journalism Education has played over the past thirty years in shaping and supporting South African journalism The implications of our work as Journalism Educators in promoting and enabling journalisms that are founded in social justice and an ethics of care. How we as educators must respond to our ever-changing social context What it takes to create enabling learning environments for students and journalists that respond to their lived realities. 		The Student Media Pre-Conference features presentations and discussions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of student media in South Africa The current state of student journalism, strategies for building student media, and a new vision for student media Experiences and insights of student media participation A new vision for student media to be added to the Makhanda Declaration. 	
08:30	Welcome Conveners: Dr Jeanne du Toit and Dr Quatro Mgogo	08:30	Welcome Convener: Ms Kerry Lanaghan
08:35	Keynote speaker The university as a neoliberal institution and the implications for the critical education of professionals. Prof Sioux McKenna (Director Centre for Postgraduate Studies)	08:40	Keynote speakers History of the student media in South Africa Mpogi Zoe Mafoko (Development Programme Coordinator, New Zealand High Commission) Naomi Grewan (Associate Producer and Communications Manager at Radio Workshop)
09:15	Panel discussion 1 Reflecting on our past: How well have journalism educators fared in the shaping and support of journalism for a new democracy? Panellists Prof Anton Harber (Henry Nxumalo Foundation) Prof Abiodun Salawu (Director of the Indigenous Language Media in Africa) Prof Herman Wasserman (Chair of the Department of Journalism, Stellenbosch University)	09:00	Guest speakers Who am I, what's my background and what am I doing now? How did my involvement in student media prepared me for working as a journalist? Panellists Ms Catherine White (Cat White Media) Mr Tafadzwa Tseisi (Co-founder, Journalism Students Network of Zimbabwe) Ms Naomi Grewan
10:30	Tea Break – AMM foyer		
11:00	Panel discussion 2 Confronting the present: key challenges and opportunities for journalism education. Panellists Prof Mandla Radebe (Department of Strategic Communication, UJ) Prof Jabulani Sifiso Mnisi (Department of Strategic Communication, UJ) Dr Theodora Adjin-Tettey (Durban University of Technology) Prof Wallace Chuma (Department of Film and Media Studies, UCT) Ms Carina Van Wyk (Head of Education and Training, Africa Check) Dr Nyx McLean (Research Associate, School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University) Mr Jude Mathurine (Department of Media and Communications, NMU)	11:00	Hot topics for student journalists Current state of student journalism Naomi Grewan Strategies for building student media Catherine White Building a student network Tafadzwa Tseisi A new vision for student media Catherine White
		12:00	Break away rooms to discuss these topics
13:00	Lunch – AMM foyer		
14:00	Panel discussion 3 Looking ahead: adapting our curricula for the future. Prof Dinesh Baliah (Wits Center for Journalism) Prof Nyasha Mboti (Department of Communication Science, UFS) Prof Oluyinka Osunkunle (Head of Communication Department, University of Fort Hare) Ms Yoliswa Mgedezi (Walter Sisulu University) Dr Jeanne Du Toit (HoS, School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University)	14:00	Plenary discussion Towards a new vision for the student media: The Makhanda Declaration Facilitator: Ms Unathi Koboka (Rhodes Music Radio Station Manager)
15:00	Closing	15:00	Closing
15:30	Memorial walk to Summit opening with members of Civil Society to honour and remember journalists who have faced, and continue to face harassment, imprisonment and death in the course of doing their jobs.		
16:15	Summit opening (See Opening programme)		
18:30	Gala Dinner: hosted by Rhodes University, with Honorary Doctorate awardees Venue: Nelson Mandela Hall		

THURSDAY 4 APRIL - SUMMIT OPENING PROGRAMME

Plenary Session: Introduction of and welcome to the 2024 Journalism Summit

Venue: Bioscience Major

16:15	Opening and introductions MC: Ms Nzinga Qunta (Journalist, Business news anchor, Lawyer)
16:20	Welcoming by HoS Prof Jeanne du Toit
16:25	Keynote speaker Justice Kathleen Satchwell (Retired Judge of the High Court in South Africa)
16:45	Guest speaker Mr John Gitongo (Transparency International, Kenya)
17:00	Journalism Summit overview Ms Thandeka Gqubule-Mbeki
17:05	Opening statements from Pre-conference and Summit stream conveners Pre-conferences Dr Jeanne Du Toit Ms Kerry Lanaghan Summit streams Prof Anthea Garman Prof Alette Schoon Ms Taryn de Vega Ms Thandeka Gqubule-Mbeki
17:25	Fareed Taamallah (Freelance Journalist and farmer, Ramallah)
17:30	Closing MC: Ms Nzinga Qunta
18:30	Gala Dinner Dinner, hosted by Rhodes University, with Honorary Doctorate awardees Venue: Nelson Mandela Hall

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RUJ20
1904-2024

JMS | SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM & MEDIA STUDIES

GALA DINNER

Join us as we celebrate Rhodes University's 2024
Honorary Doctorates

Archbishop Thabo Makgoba
Ambassador Barbara Masekela
Professor Irvy Gledhill
Mr Thandabantu August
Professor Sylvia Tamale

Time: 18:30 for 19:00 • Nelson Mandela Dining Hall • Dress: Formal/Traditional

FRIDAY 5 APRIL - SUMMIT STREAMS

JOURNALISM AS A PUBLIC GOOD: REVISITING THE ETHOS OF JOURNALISM Convener: Prof Anthea Garman Venue: Bioscience Building, Bioscience Major		TRANSLATING VOICES: ADVANCING JOURNALISM IN THE DIGITAL ERA Convener: Dr Alette Schoon Venue: Bioscience Building, Bioscience Minor 1	
The issues this stream is dealing with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journalism's ethos as a public good The role of public media in a democracy Multilingualism in private and public media (Journalism that roots itself in African cultures and African languages) Journalism's role in fostering democracy A journalism that builds citizen ownership and participation in democracy 		Advancing journalism in the digital era will focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What shifting technology means for our country and for journalism. What is happening in the technology space Opportunities for using data and AI for increasing accountability and innovation to support developmental goals How these technologies might impact the nature of our public sphere, How algorithms and AI should be integrated with human agency to ensure we do not surrender important decisions that offer no recourse to appeal 	
08:30	Welcome by Prof Anthea Garman	08:30	Welcome by Dr Alette Schoon
08:35	A new agenda for journalism Ms Lynsey Chutel (Reporter <i>The New York Times</i> and co-author of <i>Coloured: How Classification Became Culture</i>) Prof Herman Wasserman (Chair of the Department of Journalism, Stellenbosch University) Chair: Prof Anthea Garman	08:35	Keynote speaker: Why should we pay attention to issues of data and AI? Kavisha Pillay (CODE)
09:45	Dealing with the immediate: Journalism and the elections Prof Nick Binedell (Rise Mzansi)	09:00	Panel discussion Establishing a shared understanding of the challenges of data and AI Panellists Prof Susan Brokensha (Co-author of <i>AI in and for Africa: A Humanistic Perspective</i>) Mark Weinberg (Free Internet Coalition) Prof Lorenzo Dalvit (School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University) Chair: Dr Alette Schoon
10:30	Tea – Bioscience foyer		
11:00	Keynote speaker: Prof Pierre de Vos (Claude Leon Foundation Chair in Constitutional Governance, UCT Law Faculty)	11:00	Panel discussion Transforming journalism in a time of AI and datafication Panelists Maarit Jaakkola (Editor of <i>Reporting on Artificial Intelligence: A Handbook for Journalism Educators</i>) Jean le Roux (The Atlantic Council) Chair: Dr Alette Schoon
13:00	Lunch – Drostdy Dining Hall		
14:00	Plenary Guest Speaker Prof Bruce Shapiro (DART Centre, Columbia University) Venue: Bioscience Major		
14:30	Workshop on the Makhanda Declaration	14:30	Workshop on the Makhanda Declaration
16:00	Report back to Summit plenary (Bioscience Major)		
18:00	Brown bag dinner (See Jollof and Jabavu programme) Jabavu and Jollof at Africa Media Matrix (AMM) Keynote speaker: Adv Tembeka Ngcukaitobi		
20:00	Movie screening: How to Steal a Country Director: Rehad Desai Venue: Africa Media Matrix, Room 202		

FRIDAY 5 APRIL - SUMMIT STREAMS

CHARTING A COURSE: REREGULATION AND FUNDING FUTURES IN THE MEDIA Convener: Ms Taryn De Vega Venue: Bioscience Building, Bioscience Minor 2		IN THE EYE OF THE STORM: GOING BEYOND THE HEADLINES TO HEAL TRAUMA, PTSD AND PAIN IN JOURNALISM Convener: Ms Thandeka Gqubule-Mbeki Venue: Rhodes Library, Margaret Kenyon Room	
The stream seeks solutions to the regulatory and funding questions related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting and sustaining credible journalism that serves the public good Financing the future: public interest, sustainability, and media funding models Rethinking the past and charting the future: public service broadcasting, democracy and universal access Media regulation in the digital age: navigating ethics and regulation online 		This stream will look at the challenges of building spaces of care and safety for journalists dealing with trauma and PTSD induced by covering conflict, violence, and war.	
08:30	Welcome by Ms Taryn De Vega	08:30	Welcome by Ms Thandeka Gqubule-Mbeki
08:35	Guest speakers Reregulation - the future and sustainability of the South African media Mr Sbu Ngalwa (Chairperson SANEF) Ms ShoeShoe Qhu (CEO of MDDA) Prof Guy Berger (Distinguished Fellow, Research ICT Africa) Ms Uyanda Siyotula (SOS National Co-ordinator) Chair: Ms Taryn De Vega	08:35	Guest Speaker Mr Hopewell Chin'ono (Television journalist, News Producer and Documentary Film Maker)
		09:00	Keynote speaker The markers of trauma and PTSD Prof Liesel Jacobs (HoD Psychology, Rhodes University)
09:30	Panel discussion Reregulation and financial sustainability of the media panel Chair: Ms Taryn De Vega	09:45	Guest Speaker Reflections of an Organisational Psychologist on institutional spaces and how they could respond to trauma Dr Trust Kabungaidze (Deputy HoD Psychology, Rhodes University)
10:30	Tea Break - Bioscience foyer		
11:00	Guest speakers Reregulation and the digital future of the media Prof Sisanda Nkoala (Press Council Public Representative) Prof Guy Berger (Distinguished Fellow, Research ICT Africa) Mr Michael Markovitz (GIBS Media Leadership Think Tank) Ms Nomshado Lubisi-Nkosinkulu (Media Monitoring Africa Manager) Justice Kathleen Satchwell (<i>Inquiry into Media Ethics and Credibility Report</i>) Chair: Ms Taryn De Vega	11:00	Cases studies on journalism and Trauma Venue: Margaret Kenyon Room Panellists Mr Fareed Taamallah (Freelance Journalist and farmer, Ramallah) Ms Nichola Anyuor (Rongo University, Kenya) Ms Yusuf Ada Nurat Tosin (University of Abuja, Nigeria) Mr Dickson Ogunkuhle (Christian University, Uganda) Chair: Mr Peter Du Toit
		12:00	Speak Easy: Resilient narratives from the front line. Facilitator: Mr Peter Du Toit
12:00	Panel discussion Reregulation and the digital future of the media panel Chair: Ms Taryn De Vega		
13:00	Lunch - Drostdy Dining Hall		
14:00	Plenary Guest Speaker Prof Bruce Shapiro (DART Centre, Columbia University) Venue: Bioscience Major		
14:30	Workshop on the Makhanda Declaration (AMM)	14:30	Solutions discussion (Library)
16:00	Report back to Summit plenary (Bioscience Major)		
18:00	Brown bag dinner (See Jollof and Jabavu programme) Jabavu and Jollof at Africa Media Matrix (AMM) Keynote speaker: Adv Tembeka Ngcukaitobi		
20:00	Movie screening: How to Steal a Country Director: Rehad Desai Venue: Africa Media Matrix, Room 202		

South Africa meets West Africa
FRIDAY EVENING PROGRAMME
JOLLOF & JABAVU
JOHN JABAVU

18:00	Opening by Jabavu family
18:05	Address by Prof Anthea Garman Significance of JMS mural and links to the roots of journalism in the Eastern Cape
18:05	Taryn De Vega Imvo Zabantsundu: native opinion yesterday, today and tomorrow
18:15	Keynote speaker: Advocate Tembeka Ngcukaitobi Aloe Planting by Advocate Tembeka Ngcukaitobi and Dr Jeanne du Toit
18:30	Vote of thanks by Jabavu famil
18:40	Jollof is served
20:00	Movie screening: <i>How to Steal a Country</i> Director: Rehad Desai Venue: Africa Media Matrix, Room 202
21:30	Discussion

SATURDAY 6 APRIL - MAKHANDA DECLARATION

9:00	Plenary Discussion Makhanda declaration Chairs: Pre-conference and Summit Stream Chairs
12:00	Press conference Chair: Rich Mkhondo

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

An undertaking such as this Journalism Summit has many moving parts with many people working on each of them – all of whom deserve acknowledgment

Prof Sizwe Mabizela

Summit Committee

Thandeka Gqubule-Mbeki (Summit convener)
 Anthea Garman
 Jeanne du Toit
 Quatro Mgogo
 Taryn De Vega
 Alette Schoon
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 Thapelo Nyedimane
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 Asiphile Juba
 Olwethu Kepe
 Rozelle Hartz
 Onele Mcwabeni
 Xoliswa Moloi
 Amahle Shosha
 Onele Mcwabeni
 Samukelisiwe Mpulo



Jeanne du Toit, Fikile Samson, Hendrick Jali and Zino Zondani with a group of the student volunteers