

MTN SA sponsors journalism bursaries supporting small communities

MTN SA will be sponsoring bursaries, data and devices to students studying towards a journalism qualification at fraycollege as part of its commitment to supporting democracy in South Africa.



Source: © 123rf [123rf](#) MTN SA is sponsoring journalism bursaries in support of South African media industry

The bursaries cover tuition, study material, mobile devices, and airtime for 13 students. The course includes both online and in person learning components.

The one-year journalism qualification covers both traditional journalism skills and more modern skills like multimedia storytelling.

Some of the topics that are covered in the course include media law, governance, research for journalists, solutions journalism, writing, data journalism, sub-editing, podcasting, and others.

MTN chief sustainability and corporate affairs officer, Jacqui O'Sullivan says journalism plays a crucial role in upholding democracy, fostering transparency, and amplifying diverse voices.

"Recognising the importance of a robust media industry, as MTN, we're invested in the education of journalists to ensure the preservation of free press and the continued development of South Africa's democratic values."

Small, independent community media

Most of the recipients of this funding are from small, independent community media, a niche that is often overlooked when it comes to resources and capacity building, yet they are an important part of our democracy.

“MTN's commitment to supporting community media aligns with the company's broader social responsibility efforts to drive positive change and empower communities across South Africa.

“The bursaries reflect MTN's belief that education is a catalyst for progress and that investing in the country's future journalists will ultimately contribute to a more informed and engaged society,” says O’Sullivan.

NTN adds it wanted to ensure sure that each student had the resources to not only attend classes but also to tell the stories of their community.



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Danette Breitenbach 27 Jun 2023



fraycollege CEO, Mamaponya Motsai agrees it is important to ensure that journalists from community media and small independent media are skilled to serve their communities with “excellence”.

“These journalists cover communities that are often overlooked by mainstream media or big media.

They play a vital role in getting information to those communities and telling their stories, we must support them to do their jobs well, so their communities are not disadvantaged by having journalists who are not well trained,” says Motsai, whose institution, fraycollege provides specialised journalism and communications courses across the African continent.

Course on par with some of the best journalism entry courses

Motsai said the course is on par with some of the best journalism entry courses in South Africa. “We have incorporated into the course all the skills that we know a journalist needs to succeed in a modern newsroom.”

O’ Sullivan adds, “In today's digital age, access to technology is crucial for aspiring journalists to stay connected, gather information, and engage with their audiences effectively.

“By providing mobile devices and airtime as part of the bursaries, we aim to bridge the digital divide and empower students with the necessary tools to excel in their studies and future careers.

“We believe that by combining financial assistance with technological support, we can enhance their learning experience and enable them to make a meaningful impact in South Africa's media landscape.”

Bursary recipient

Lungani Mhlongo, who hosts the current affairs programme on *Kasi FM* in Vosloorus east of Johannesburg, is one of the recipients of the bursary.

Mhlongo says although he has been working in journalism for a few years, he has had no formal training. He said this opportunity will allow him to do just that and grow himself professionally and offer a better service to his listeners.

“I want to offer my listeners the best I can give them. I also want to grow myself. This is coming just at the right time where I

feel like I am ready to go to the next level,” says Mhlongo.

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