

Wits and Kagiso Media in new radio training venture

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The University of the Witwatersrand and Kagiso Media have concluded a partnership agreement that will see the company contribute R1.8 million to the establishment of a new radio training facility at the university.



In a move that is set to boost the development of skills and raise standards in the broadcasting sector, Kagiso Media Limited (KML)'s donation will help establish the Kagiso Media Radio Training Centre, which will house the newly established Wits Radio Academy and the campus station, Voice of Wits (VoW).

Murphy Morobe, the Chief Executive Officer of Kagiso Media, says the corporate social investment initiative is to deepen the skills base in the radio industry, which is faced with rapid technological developments. "As a company with substantial radio broadcasting interests, it is imperative for Kagiso Media, especially in a developing country context, to contribute to the radio skills in the country so that our people can acquire internationally competitive skills that are aligned to current technological developments."

The initiative is positioned to be Gauteng's centre of excellence in professional radio training. The academy will focus on all aspects of the radio business; including journalism, management, on-air presenting, marketing, advertising and programming. It will provide not only theoretical, but practical training as well. To complement this, Kagiso Media, and hopefully other radio broadcasters, will avail internship opportunities to programme participants.

Prof. Anton Harber, head of the Wits journalism programme, said: "We are very excited by the new venture, and are very pleased that both Kagiso Media and the Media Development & Diversity Agency have seen its potential. We hope the academy can play an important role to strengthen all sectors of radio, particularly community radio, which continues to play a crucial role in South Africa."

He added that the academy would be able to make use of the University's intellectual resources, its access to established players in the radio industry as well as the campus station to offer unique training and other support to the sector. Research, internships and short work experiences are also on the academy's programme.

"We are also committed to contributing to the deepening of our democracy by improving the calibre of radio and creating a cadre of media workers who are in tune with the latest technological developments within the sector," said Morobe.

The funding from Kagiso Media will be utilised to upgrade the infrastructure at the University's existing radio station VoW which will maintain its independence as a campus community radio station as per ICASA license obligations.

The core offering of the academy, situated in the University's journalism programme, will be the Wits Advanced Radio Certificate, aimed at people hoping to enter the field as well as people already working who want to deepen their skills. Some bursaries are available for students from community radio and applications for courses will close tomorrow, 30 April 2009. The first intake of students will begin lectures next month.

Seven two-week modules are planned in areas such as Radio Studies; Local Radio Journalism; Management, Programming and Production, Presentation, Marketing and Sales, Radio goes Online and Management. Students will have to complete five modules in order to obtain the Advanced Certificate. The modules can be taken on their own too.

More details and application forms are available online, at www.journalism.co.za/radio or by email from .

For more information please contact Fumane Diseko (Kagiso Media Limited) on (011) 527-0600/0650 or 083 340 2298 or

email , or Franz Kruger (Acting Director: Wits Radio Academy) on 082 903 4196 or email .

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