



Call for Innovative Media Ideas: “Access Innovation Hackathons”

Introduction

South Sudan’s independent media have struggled to establish themselves as the credible and reliable entities that they must become ahead of the country’s first democratic elections. The country has continued to grapple with intercommunal conflict, ethnic differences, leadership failures, and rampant corruption since signing the 2018 peace agreement. Now, the extension of the transitional period established under the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) due to its sluggish implementation will delay national elections from 2023 until at least late 2024.

At this critical moment in the peace process, the media have a crucial role to play in South Sudan becoming a viable democracy. Furthermore, freedom of the press is extremely precarious in South Sudan, where journalists work under constant threat and intimidation, and where censorship is ever-present.

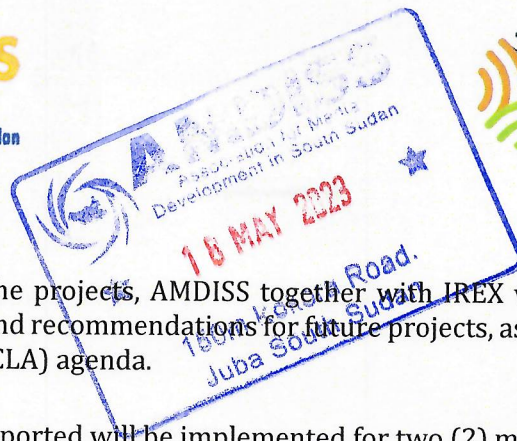
AMDISS is working with IREX to implement the Sustainable Independent Media Activity (SIMA) **to improve access to credible, accurate, and reliable information for South Sudanese citizens by promoting the sustainability of high-quality, independent radio operations.** SIMA is grounded in the understanding that a vibrant, resilient, and self-reliant media sector is a core building block for greater inclusive social cohesion, accountability, enhanced democratic governance, conflict resolution, and more pluralistic societies. In designing an approach to bolster independent media amidst a wide range of obstacles, IREX’s together with AMDISS’s locally led approach will improve access, sustainability, and quality of independent radio.

One strategy of SIMA is to foster innovation through supporting access innovation Hackathons. The access innovation Hackathons is to promote increased information access by encouraging innovation and participation through hackathons/competitions. The Innovation Hackathons will foster additional networking and collaboration among local experts and innovators in the media sector in South Sudan.

AMDISS as a technical partner, SIMA is pleased to announce the first hackathons and solicit participation with a strong focus on the inclusion of diverse voices among applicants.

AMDISS is calling for innovative hackathons proposals from media practitioners, innovators, and youth to work together to understand the needs of their communities, identify existing problems, and pitch solutions (both tech and non-tech) to issues surrounding access to and demand for credible information, ability to reach target listeners with relevant content, and the ability for media practitioners to get deeper access to information and connections needed to make their work more impactful.

At least five (5) innovative hackathon ideas will be supported with microgrants for selected hackathon participants. Microgrants will range between \$2,000 to \$4000. Those that will be selected and awarded the microgrants will pilot their ideas and test which methods work best.



Once they have piloted the projects, AMDISS together with IREX will work with innovators to capture lessons learned and recommendations for future projects, as part of SIMA's Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) agenda.

The project idea to be supported will be implemented for two (2) months June – July 2023.

The objective of the Access Innovation Hackathons is:

- To encourage innovation of new ideas across the project areas where media practitioners, innovators, and youth find ways how to ease some of the needs of their communities by identifying existing problems.
- To develop the ideas into workable solutions to the issues surrounding access to credible information
- To reach target listeners with relevant content

Who can apply

- The recipient can be media practitioners, youth, radio stations, innovators, and freelance journalists.
- If you have ideas both (both tech and non-tech) that will ease the needs of your community's access to information
- The recipient (s) must demonstrate a strong focus and experience in working with their communities through media in responding to some of their challenging needs.

Eligibility and Requirements:

- Be a South Sudanese from the age of 18 – 35 years but can be older.
- Be a media practitioner, youth, radio station, innovator, and freelance journalist.
- Demonstrate some levels of professional experience in the media as a practitioner,
- Have a good command of English or Arabic or both.
- Works for a news outlet based in South Sudan or has ever worked in the media.
- Innovative ideas must mainly target the counties of, Baliet, Wau, Jur, Kapoeta, Budi Leer/Mayendit, Abyei, and Juba
- Projects must demonstrate continuity after the micro-grant.

How to apply:

- Prepare and submit a proposal showing innovative ideas aligned with the requirements above.
- Submit a brief profile detailing his or her experience in media work.

The access innovation Hackathon selection process will involve a panel of judges and eventually audience vetting the best ideas culminating in a national event where winning innovative media ideas will be announced and awarded the micro-grant. The award is anticipated to take place in the first week of June 2023.



Deadline for application: May 29, 2023

Send your applications via email: info@amdiss.org

