The amaBhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism NPC is a non-profit company that develops investigative journalism – a public interest task we believe promotes free, capable media and open, accountable, just democracy.

This is our narrative report for the 12 months ended 31 March 2020.

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ORGANISATIONAL UPDATE

Preparing this annual narrative allowed us to reflect not only on the year past but the last decade too – given that we’ve recently celebrated 10 years since publishing our first stories in March 2010.

In a decade of impunity, amaB has been at the forefront of fighting for accountability.

We looked at the media landscape in 2009 and decided on a new direction to help preserve and build the skills and space for investigative journalism. It was to be a non-profit, releasing us from some of the pressures of a declining commercial environment and its baleful impact on jobs, skills and resources.

We were helped in that endeavour by our then publisher, the Mail & Guardian, but in 2016, as the M&G struggled and new horizons beckoned, we struck out on our own.

We lost the M&G’s financial contribution, but our brand and our reach grew – and we led the way in filling the budgetary gap by pioneering crowdfunding in the local media sector. (Our amaB Supporters have covered a quarter of operating expenditure over the last three years.)

When the #GuptaLeaks came in 2017, our profile exploded. It has not been easy to keep up.

We now run a “business” with a turnover of some R10-million. Yes, it’s a non-profit, but it needs to be managed to the high standards of accountability that our stakeholders demand – as we do ourselves.

April 2019: AmaB staged a town-hall discussion before the national elections. Our Sam Sole (right) is in conversation with Qaanitah Hunter, then with the Sunday Times, then-amaB advocacy coordinator Karabo Rajulili and Prof Pierre de Vos.

Our small team needs to manage the ceaseless balancing between what is important and what is possible given our still-finite resources – and keep punching above our weight. We need to keep doing that even when President Cyril Ramaphosa’s “new dawn” – ushered in at least in part due to our own efforts – proves to be fitful, weak and dogged by the damage of the Zuma years. We need to keep doing that with integrity in the sometimes-toxic media environment, which among other things saw us banned from events of the EFF.
And we need to stay ahead of the curve. Our work has led us to a new emphasis on what we dubbed #EarthCrimes, i.e. abuses of power that may affect our shared future on a habitable Planet Earth. We launched our first stories under that hashtag shortly after the end of the grant period, in April 2020.

Separately, we have harvested remarkable advocacy victories in 2019: the high court decision overturning parts of the state’s surveillance regime, including bulk interception; the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration’s recognition that its hearings are by default open; the enactment of a new “critical infrastructure” law ameliorated by a public domain defence we had argued for; and a court order that the department of social development must disclose its records on non-profit organisations.

One of our biggest efforts this year affected the investigations support part of our mandate – again largely unseen and unsung.

Since we launched amaB we have hosted about 80 fellows from across Southern Africa and helped some of them launch their own investigative journalism outfits, including in Namibia, Botswana and Lesotho. But they have struggled to secure funding, so we spun off the IJ Hub, a separate non-profit to facilitate organisational and editorial capacity building and collaboration while acting as a fundraising hub to promote and de-risk donor support for investigative journalism regionally.

And as we write this, we are in the clutches of a global pandemic. The onslaught of Covid-19 is ravaging peoples’ lives and economies. The media sector has not been spared. The associated economic fallout poses a very serious threat to media sustainability. And at a time when vigilance is most important, many governments look on the crisis to roll back accountability.

AmaB’s commitment to digging dung endures.

**Our people:** AmaB bid a sad farewell to investigators Zanele Mji (April 2019) and Caryn Dolley (September 2019), and advocacy coordinator Karabo Rajuili (January 2020). Caryn’s contract position came to an end and Karabo, who had built our advocacy portfolio so passionately over the course of five years, accepted an international position too good to refuse.

Drew Forrest, our long-serving investigations support coordinator, accepted a transfer in July 2019 to the new IJ Hub, which we spun off and are incubating. See more on the IJ Hub in the section on our investigations support programme.

We have been working hard to close the gaps with appropriate talent.

Dewald van Rensburg joined in May 2019 to strengthen our capacity for financial and corporate investigations.

Cherese Thakur, a highly qualified attorney with a track record of information rights advocacy, joined as advocacy coordinator in April 2020 after Murray Hunter, previously with the Right2Know Campaign, served in an acting position for two months.

We are in the market to fill further positions with appropriate talent, with an emphasis on transformation.

As at 31 March 2020, the team comprised:

- Investigators Tabelo Timse, Susan Comrie, Micah Reddy, Dewald van Rensburg
- Managing partners and investigators Sam Sole and Stefaans Brümmer
- Digital coordinator and investigator Sally Evans
- Acting advocacy coordinator Murray Hunter
- Operating coordinator Lizel Shepherd
- Administrator Nomagugu Nyoni
- Fellows Sibongakonke Mama and Gemma Ritchie

Our board remained unchanged:

- Professor Tawana Kupe, vice-chancellor of the University of Pretoria (non-executive chair)
- Stefaans Brümmer, amaB joint managing partner (executive)
- Nicholas Dawes, former editor and Human Rights Watch deputy executive director (non-executive)
- Sally Evans, amaB digital coordinator (non-executive, staff representative)
- Sithembile Mbete, University of Pretoria politics lecturer (non-executive)
Reader engagement: Our goal is to build a community of wider, younger and less-served readers, engaging them and empowering them with investigative content. Are we? The question can be answered only in part due to blind spots in the available data, but the indicators are encouraging:

Our tipoff facilities, which are very well utilised – ballpark estimate 100 tipoffs/month – remain dominated by ordinary people highlighting complaints regarding issues affecting them, often at a hyper-local level. While we can do justice to only a small proportion of tipoffs, it does show that our stories are reaching people far and wide and inspires them to act on abuses of power and to engage with us.

A growing (although fluctuating) proportion of readers visiting our website do so via mobile phones, which likely indicates not only a general trend from desktop to mobile, but also a trend towards younger and wider audiences. In March 2020, 63% of readers were on mobile, almost twice as many as the 32% on desktop (the rest being on tablet).

On our site, 42% of readers were women in the final quarter, compared to only 34% a year earlier. In the same quarter, 31% of readers fell into the age bracket of 18-34, up from 23% a year earlier.

Consistent with our distributed publication strategy, by far the largest part of our readership (91% in the final quarter) is on co-publishers’ websites, predominantly News24 and Daily Maverick, which together gave us access to over 7-million unique monthly visitors, the largest footprint in the country. In the last quarter, our stories on co-publishers’ sites had about 1.1-million unique views.

From the figures, it is clear that our stories have significant reach, and that we appear to be getting to a younger, wider, less-served readership as intended.

Reader support: During the year under review, amaB Supporters donated almost R2.6-million, up from R2.2-million the year before. This gave us a crowdfunding-to-opex ratio of about 26.4% (target 29%).

For the year our approach centered on connecting with our readers via newsletter making formal appeals on a quarterly basis, and making informal appeals via newsletter and social media at key points on our editorial developments and organisational calendar.

Hearteningly, monthly recurring donations made up about 93% of donations via GivenGain, our main giving platform, and about 70% of all donations were between R50 – R150, demonstrating the power of small donors.

While we have not met our 29% crowdfunding target, we are satisfied that we have settled the concept of voluntary reader support as an important element of accountability media sustainability in South Africa. (Last year, we were just short of our 25% target. The year before we made 28%, driven by the #GuptaLeaks.)
INVESTIGATIONS PROGRAMME

Objective: to develop best practice in our field by producing investigative stories that are accurate and fair, expose wrongdoing and empower people to hold power to account.

The stories we published – some 84 during the reporting period – served the public through the exposure of wrongdoing and our industry via best-practice example.

Our stories continued to shape the national discourse on accountability, reaching readers via our website and co-publishing arrangements with the Daily Maverick, News24 and in some instances the Financial Mail, Mail & Guardian and Finance Uncovered.

Publishing jointly with the Daily Maverick and News24 gave us a particularly wide reach – often over 100 000 readers per story, and sometimes several times that, which is very high in South African media terms. Regular citation by other print media and broadcast interviews amplified our reach and impact.

All our stories are available on our website, amaBhungane.org. Key themes included:

Corporate malfeasance: This remains a focus for us as companies, local and foreign, have served as enablers of state capture and as destructive actors in their own right, as emerged from our report on a huge case of alleged profit shifting and fraud at Samancor and from our deep dive into the battle between a community and a mining company at Xolobeni.

The rentier politics of the EFF and others: We delved into municipal muck, where the corrosive political habits of exchanging tenders for cash are incubated, showing (here, here and here) how the EFF works the system and the negative effect it can have on service delivery. Our reporting led to the EFF banning us from its press conferences.

Of course the EFF learned these tricks at the feet of the ANC as we demonstrated more systematically in our exposé of the early history of the politically-connected Regiments Capital, which built a financially symbiotic relationship with the ruling party that was so successful that Regiments became the handmaiden of state capture. The outgoing and incoming mayors of Johannesburg (Herman Mashaba and Geoff Makhubo) traded allegations of corruption based on our stories.

State capture fallout: The extent and impact of state capture is still emerging, including at the Zondo Commission, where evidence has repeatedly vindicated our reporting. Regiments Capital has featured prominently in our own coverage of the fallout (here, here and here) in keeping with its central role as a trojan horse for Gupta access to state owned enterprises.

Meanwhile we also kept tabs on the Guptas, whose fugitive status does not seem to have slowed their spending, notably on two grandiose weddings (here and here) which appear to have cemented ties to elements of India’s elite and possibly laid the groundwork for a move from Dubai to Uzbekistan.

The fightback campaign: The fight against President Cyril Ramaphosa’s cautious clean-up of the aftermath of state capture is real, generating another coalition of the wounded. In 2019 it emerged quite clearly that public protector Busi Mkhwebane, wittingly or not, had become a battering ram for the fightback campaign, but the direct evidence was sparse.

Working together with News24, we sourced and reported on a dramatic whistle-blower affidavit from a senior investigator in Mkhwebane’s office (here, here, here and here) making detailed allegations of how Mkhwebane had allegedly abused her office, for instance by allowing the country’s spy agency to influence her findings.

The Public Investment Corporation and its private clients: There is evidence that the EFF also dabbled in the bigger leagues of rentier politics enabled by the PIC, which appears to have served as a patronage machine for various ANC factions over a long period (see here and here).

However, a particular focus has been on one special patron-client relationship – that between the PIC and Dr Iqbal Survé. That’s because the story of the PIC’s investment in his business (here and here) ticks many boxes of our focus on the intersection of politics with corporate malfeasance as shown by our delving (here and here).
into allegations of insider trading. Survé is also important because of his role in the PIC-funded purchase and mismanagement of the country’s largest newspaper group, which in certain respects has become the mouthpiece for the fightback campaign by political forces that fed off state capture.

The threat of organised crime: We reminded readers of how state capture began with the suborning of the security and criminal justice arms of the state and how these battles are still playing out in the underworld (here, here and here) and in law enforcement (here, here and here). We also exposed a powerful politician’s apparent manipulation of the police directorate for priority crime investigation (the Hawks) to intimidate his lover.

Community Work Programme: A big focus of our investigative work in the first months of 2020 has been the R4-billion-a-year Community Work Programme (see here, here, here and here), with a data driven investigative series showing how money meant to relieve the plight of the poor has been diverted to friends and family of the government’s appointed implementing agents. AmaB, working with data experts, made public a database of supplier contracting which yielded more tipoff and leads. This was an exciting development in our engagement with readers and innovative digital publication.

July 2019: A big focus is making our work more accessible. Video is a part of that journey. Sally Evans interviews Micah Reddy at our Media Mill office in Johannesburg.

Recognition: Our investigations have been acknowledged by our peers and industry stakeholders. Our journalists shone at awards. During the reporting period we received accolades including:

Sanlam Awards for Excellence in Financial Journalism, June 2019: Craig McKune and Susan Comrie were runners up in the Business and Companies category.

The Global Shining Light award, September 2019: Our #GuptaLeaks collaboration with the Daily Maverick, News24, OpenUp and Finance Uncovered was co-winner of this prestigious international honour bestowed once every two years by the Global Investigative Journalism Network.

Vodacom Journalist of the Year Awards, November 2019: Susan Comrie won the Gauteng regional award in the politics category for her exposé on the dubious transactions between Regiments Capital and former Johannesburg finance chief (now mayor) Geoff Makhubo.
INVESTIGATIONS SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Objective: to help others in the media engage in and develop investigative journalism.
Activities included hosting fellows, presenting workshops and supporting investigative outfits in the rest of the SADC region.

In 2019, this work took on a new dimension via the IJ Hub, a new non-profit which we spun off to build organisational and editorial capacity, and promote and de-risk donor support for investigative journalism in the SADC region. Our engagement with the IJ Hub has been both as incubator and gratis service provider to it.

February 2020: Susan Comrie with participant journalists at a training in Windhoek.

Workshops: AmaB conducted three major training sessions during the reporting period:

Zambia: In May 2019, amaB managing partner Sam Sole conducted a one-day session in Lusaka, in collaboration with the Makanday Centre for Investigative Journalism. He focused on the investigative process, using case studies as a teaching aid. About 15 Zambian journalists attended. This was followed by another day’s session conducted by amaB digital editor Sally Evans, focusing on the use of social media to amplify investigative stories; tools to create visual elements to better illustrate stories via social media; and issues relating to journalistic integrity in the age of fake news.

Swaziland: In May 2019, Sally Evans conducted a workshop in Mbabane on digital security, homing in on issues of online privacy, the use of end-to-end encryption software; data protection and applications to help implement minimum standards for data security. She also discussed the growth of social media users in Swaziland; social media tools to help maximise engagement and journalistic ethics on social media. More than 20 journalists attended.

Namibia: In February 2020, Susan Comrie conducted a workshop in Windhoek on trends and corruption in money laundering. The workshop explored the complexity of corruption and money-laundering techniques, and unpacked approaches on big investigations involving multinational companies. About 20 journalists attended this interactive workshop.

Fellowships: Seven journalists from the rest of the SADC region completed amaB fellowships during the reporting period. Each of the fellows was based at our Johannesburg office and worked with the guidance of
the amaB team and Drew Forrest (who transferred from amaB to the IJ Hub as its managing partner: editorial in July 2019).

- Vitus-Gregory Gondwe, an investigative journalist from Malawi, joined us for three months from March to June 2019. (He has since gone on to launch his own investigative centre in Malawi.)
- Zweli Martin Dlamini, an investigative journalist from Swaziland, joined us from April to June 2019. During this time, he also did a week long stint at the Daily Maverick.
- Grace Khombe and Bobby Kabango, investigative journalists from Malawi, joined us for a month in July 2019. Their fellowships at amaB were sponsored by the International Centre for Asset Recovery.
- Okeri Ngutjinazo – an investigative journalist with The Namibian, and Ryder Gabathuse, an investigative journalist with Mmegi in Botswana, joined us for three months from September to November 2019. Their fellowships with amaB were the first facilitated by the IJ Hub.
- Sechaba Mokhethi, of the MNN Centre for Investigative Journalism in Lesotho, joined us in December 2019 for three months. His fellowship at amaB was also facilitated by the IJ Hub.

Two OSF-SA fellows completing postgraduate studies in journalism, Sibongakonke Mama and Gemma Ritchie, joined our team for six months in January 2020. Both are South African.

**Incubating the IJ Hub:** Improving investigative journalism is a process, not an event. The investigative unit, centres and centres-in-formation we have worked with in Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, Swaziland and Lesotho need to continue building capacity.

For them, raising and diversifying sources of funding has been an uphill battle. AmaB’s capacity building baton, and a strategy for helping to raise funds from more diverse sources for the entire “basket” of centres in the SADC region, has now been passed to the IJ Hub. AmaB spun off the IJ Hub; is incubating it towards full independence; and will remain one of a number of service providers to it, in our case gratis.

The IJ Hub has been incorporated as a non-profit company with this founding objective:

- To support investigative journalism in the SADC region in the service of a free, capable media and open, accountable democracy. This object shall be achieved by, inter alia –
  - Raising and de-risking philanthropic funding for investigative journalism in the SADC region;
  - Supporting and building the capacity of organisations practising investigative journalism in the SADC region, at administrative and organisational levels; and
  - Supporting and building the capacity of organisations and journalists practising investigative journalism in the SADC region, at an editorial level.

Apart from its fundraising function, the IJ Hub has upscaled the organisational and editorial capacity building previously performed by amaB, by following a simple formula: It will facilitate and fund fellowships and workshops, but where necessary outsource the implementation (i.e. presenting of workshops and hosting of fellows) to amaB and other service providers, which will allow for an increase in the current level of service delivery.

It will also provide a range of other services, such as advice on organisational matters, and monitoring and evaluation, again outsourced where necessary.

The IJ Hub commenced operations in September 2019.
ADVOCACY PROGRAMME

Objective: to help secure the information rights (access to information, freedom of the media and speech) that are the lifeblood of our field.

While advocacy is a task without horizons and one can never say “mission accomplished”, we look back at our performance during the reporting period with some satisfaction.

Our long-standing constitutional challenge to Rica (the Act which regulates the interception of communications) and unregulated bulk interception was heard and won comprehensively in the High Court. This marked an important victory in the fight against the abuse of the state’s interception capabilities to target journalists, activists and political opponents. The reality and fear of unjustified interception constitute real obstacles to the free flow of information, including to and via the media. The Constitutional Court’s judgment following a confirmation hearing is pending. We are cautiously optimistic of the outcome.

Separately, the High Court also ordered full access to the records of charitable foundations linked to the Zuma family, confirming the unqualified access provisions of the Nonprofit Organisations Act; and granted a contempt order in our battle for mining rights transparency.

Lobbying over legislation has also paid off: The Critical Infrastructure Protection Bill was signed into law with a “public domain” defence we had argued for; and we have in conversation with the Department of Trade and Industry and Nedlac partners helped shape significant changes in a draft Companies Amendment Bill, inter alia to help introduce beneficial ownership disclosure.

At the end of the grant period, our input also helped introduce accountability and transparency provisions in government regulations permitting cellphone location data harvesting to fight Covid-19.

Our successes, we believe, have contributed materially to the development of legislative, jurisprudential and practical instruments ensuring greater access to information for journalists and the public, and reduced obstacles to investigative story production.

February 2020: AmaB and legal team outside the Constitutional Court for our RICA challenge hearing.
We detail a selection of matters on which we have worked.

**Interception and the protection of sources:** In a landmark ruling on 16 September 2019, the High Court ruled that Rica, the state’s surveillance law, was unconstitutional in several important respects.

This marks an important victory in our long-standing campaign to ensure that the state’s surveillance practices conform to constitutional standards and are not abused to target perceived political opponents, including journalists and their sources.

We await the outcome of the confirmation hearing that was held in the Constitutional Court in February 2020.

**Accessing Zuma foundation records:** On 29 May 2019, the High Court granted us an unopposed order against the social development department’s nonprofit organisations directorate, and included a punitive cost order. This was an important affirmation of the unqualified disclosure obligation contained in the Nonprofit Organisations Act, and laid down the law to a non-responsive institution.

**Mining rights transparency:** Following our success in obtaining an enforcement order in 2017 after the department of minerals and energy failed to fulfil our information request regarding all coal rights held in SA, we were further disappointed: despite various undertakings and the supply of some records, the department still failed to make full records available.

In late 2018 we engaged our attorneys to seek a contempt order – which the High Court granted on 5 December 2019. The court order included a penalty in the form of a R100 000 fine, to be paid personally, if the department’s information officer and deputy information officer failed to produce the records. Concerningly, the officials have missed their court-imposed deadline. We have put them on terms and are awaiting an outcome.

**CCMA media access:** In 2015 we successfully intervened together with Media24 for media access to a Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) hearing between Adrian Lackay and the SA Revenue Service. At the time, all arbitration hearings were held behind closed doors, regardless of the public interest.

While Commissioner Cameron Morajane decided in our favour at the time, he stopped short of making his ruling apply to future matters. Over the years, we checked in with the CCMA from time to time. Finally, in October 2019, it issued new guidelines to permit media access, following the contours of Morajane’s ruling, confirming the impact of our 2015 intervention.

**Critical Infrastructure Protection Act:** Previously, we made submissions to Parliament on problematic provisions that could have seen journalists jailed for 30 years just for taking pictures of what used to be called “national key points” and will now be called critical infrastructure.

Our submissions and a resultant opinion from Adv Wim Trengrove led to important amendments, including a public domain defence. The Bill was finally passed by the National Assembly in March 2019 and the president signed it into law on 30 November 2019.

**Companies Amendment Bill:** A new Bill has been in the making for some time to cure deficiencies in and reform the Companies Act. Our interest is to ensure maximum transparency of corporate information to the public, including access to beneficial ownership data. Our ongoing input has helped authorities and Nedlac refine aspects of the draft Bill.

**Public Investment Corporation Amendment Act:** In July 2019, we tabled a submission to the Mpati commission of inquiry into the PIC to argue for greater transparency provisions in the Act. This, we submitted, would help protect the PIC from the type of malfeasance detailed in our investigative stories and the allegations heard by the commission.

The commission released its report in March 2020, i.a. recommending “an urgent redrafting of legislation relating to the PIC” to achieve greater transparency and accountability. Two things we had argued for were specifically included: ministerial directives to be made public, and more information on the PIC’s listed and unlisted investments, both via Parliament.
Party funding transparency and CR17 intervention: The Political Party Funding Act was signed into law in January 2019. It included an amendment – quarterly instead of annual public disclosure – which we had motivated for in parliamentary submissions.

In February 2020, we joined the High Court hearing between President Cyril Ramaphosa and the public protector regarding the latter’s report on the Bosasa donation the president’s CR17 campaign. Our intervention did not concern the merits between the respective parties. Rather, it was about ensuring transparency going forward, in particular to ensure information regarding the funding of candidates contesting internal party positions is made public.

We were not successful but have applied for leave to appeal.

Paia Amendment Bill: In July 2019, Parliament published a draft Bill in compliance with the Constitutional Court order in *My Vote Counts v Minister of Justice and another* to amend the Promotion of Access to Information Act (Paia) by the end of 2019 to ensure access to party funding information.

We made submissions on key deficiencies in the Bill, presenting at public hearings held by the justice portfolio committee in August, and making further written submissions to a National Council of Provinces (NCOP) select committee in November. Without taking these concerns into consideration, the NCOP passed the Bill in December 2019 and the president signed it into law on 26 May 2020.

We remain concerned that the legislators failed to address very real problems in the Bill we and others pointed out. We are considering further steps.

Covid-19 regulations: In the first week of South Africa’s lockdown, amaB gave input which contributed to improved privacy and transparency provisions in Covid-19 regulations regarding government access to cellphone location data. This flowed from the success of our earlier Rica challenge.

Challenging Sars secrecy provisions: In November 2019, together with the Financial Mail, we filed High Court papers seeking access to the tax returns of former president Jacob Zuma and challenging the constitutionality of tax secrecy provisions contained in Paia and the Tax Administration Act (TAA).

We are not seeking blanket access to the tax records of the general public. Rather, the application seeks to ensure that Paia and the TAA’s blanket secrecy will be overridden if in the public interest – which we argue is the case with respect to former president Zuma’s records.

Access to Steinhoff PwC forensic report: In October 2019, we launched a High Court application, again together with the Financial Mail, for an order compelling Steinhoff International Holdings to disclose a PwC report it had commissioned on SA’s largest ever corporate fraud. The request was refused on the basis that the report is “legally privileged”.

We regard this application as an important step to combat the corporate practice of hiding behind legal privilege, and to develop jurisprudence on the application of Paia’s public interest disclosure provision.

Access to Hawks records: In 2015, we applied under Paia for records held by the police about then Hawks head General Berning Ntlemeza’s appointment. After the police failed to comply, we applied to court. The police and minister eventually consented to an order under which they were to disclose in 30 days. This was a victory in principle only, as the respondents embarked on the most extraordinary procrastination.

After our pleas fell on deaf ears, we brought a contempt-of-court application in December 2018, set down to be heard in May 2019. With less than two weeks before the hearing, the state attorney acting on behalf of the police and the minister submitted notice to oppose the matter. At the time of writing the state attorney had still not filed an answering affidavit. We are considering our options.

Other access matters: For the year amaB made 29 share register requests, 23 of which were successful, and 27 Paia requests, 16 of which were wholly or partly successful. Some of the remaining matters are subject to ongoing challenge. In February 2020, we had a windfall of 238 separate documents relating to the Integrated Resource Plan 2018 comments process, after we successfully appealed the energy department’s original refusal to disclose submissions it had received from the public.

Access to Information Network: Between February and September 2019, we served as secretariat of the Access to Information Network following the South African History Archive’s resignation from the role. A major
achievement in this period was the release of the 9th Paia shadow report on 27 September 2019, a day ahead of International Day for Universal Access to Information.

As with previous shadow reports, this one highlighted the dismal rate of compliance by public and private institutions. The network called for the urgent operationalisation of the Office of the Information Regulator, which has statutory powers to enforce Paia compliance.

**Regional advocacy**: On 19 and 20 September 2019, we participated in Namibia in a regional consultation to discuss the text of the revised Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa, which was adopted during the African Union Commission in October 2002.

The process is intended to revise and expand the declaration to include freedom of expression, access to information and digital rights issues, which may have been only partly included or not included at all in 2002. The consultation was held on behalf of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa, a special mechanism of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights.

**Sanef inquiry into media ethics and credibility**: In February 2020, amaB made a written submission to the Sanef inquiry into media ethics and credibility, followed by a video conference engagement with the inquiry panel. This submission was confined to amaB’s own experiences and our internal transparency and accountability mechanisms relevant to areas such as editorial standards and organisational funding.
OUR SUPPORTERS

Our work in 2019/20 was made possible by members of the public – our amaB Supporters – and charitable foundations. All donations/grants above R10 000 a year are vetted and declared publicly.

We acknowledge these grants (which unless otherwise indicated coincided with the review period):

- Bertha Foundation: R600 000 grant
- Claude Leon Foundation: R2 000 000 grant, R429 816 rollover and R231 979 litigation cost recoveries (Jan 2019 – Dec 2020)
- Millennium Trust: R1 900 000 grant
- RAITH Foundation: R1 050 000 grant and R95 041 rollover
- Open Society Foundation for South Africa: R1 500 000 grant
- Omidyar Network/Luminate grant: US$100 000 grant and R659 755 rollover (Jul 2018 – Jun 2020)
- Cameron Schrier Foundation via South Africa Development Fund: US$50 000 grant (Oct 2019 – Sep 2020)
- The Ruth and Anita Wise Charitable and Educational Trust: R750 000 grant (Oct 2018 – Sep 2020)

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- Egg Trust: R250 000
- JM Harris: R14 000
- The Inglis Family Charitable Trust: R50 000
- Co-Pierre Georg: R14 400
- Dave Woollam: R20 000
- René Swart: R25 000
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