

## **CREATIVE COMMONS SOUTH AFRICA DRAFTS NOW AVAILABLE**

*The innovative nonprofit pairs with South African experts to offer localized versions of its “some rights reserved” copyright licenses soon*

**SAN FRANCISCO, USA AND JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA — October 19, 2004** — Creative Commons, a nonprofit dedicated to building a body of creative work free to share and build upon, announced today that South Africa is the latest country to join its international efforts. Creative Commons copyright licenses, which are available at no charge from the group’s website (<http://creativecommons.org>), allow authors and artists to mark their works as free to copy or transform under certain conditions — to declare “some rights reserved,” in contrast to the traditional “all rights reserved” — thereby enabling others to access a growing pool of raw materials without legal friction. South Africa joins twelve other nations in the draft phase of adapting the Creative Commons licenses; another nine nations already offer localized Creative Commons licenses.

Led by the Johannesburg-based LINK Centre, Creative Commons South Africa plans to adapt the copyright licenses for use under South African law and to build local engagement with and use of Creative Commons-licensed content. Andrew Rens, a former lecturer at Wits University Law School, is leading the legal aspects of the project while Heather Ford, LINK Centre associate, directs the overall South African effort.

“South Africa is well-placed to pioneer developments in the field of intellectual property law,” said Ford. “Through the Treatment Action Campaign we have had huge success in gaining access to cheaper HIV/AIDS drugs. More recently South Africa has helped to lead a ‘development agenda’ at WIPO which aims to use knowledge as a tool for empowerment, rather than to deepen existing divides.”

Rens says that South Africa’s innovative constitution has resulted in dramatic changes to many areas of law affecting the transmission of ideas — including freedom of expression and access to information — a development with potentially interesting consequences for the local enforcement of copyright laws.

South Africa offers unique opportunities and poses unique challenges for the Creative Commons model. Since the demise of apartheid, South Africa has emerged from global isolation as a model for democracy around the world. With one of the world’s most progressive constitutions and a Bill of Rights that

stresses individual freedoms, it is also a leader in African policy development, and a champion for the causes of the developing world. South Africa is, nonetheless, still a divided society. A small, wealthy, relatively sophisticated population lives side by side with and a large, unskilled informal population. Only 4 million of the nation's 43 million residents are online.

To join the discussion on the local 'porting' of the Creative Commons licenses and help make some real change, go to South African website, <<http://za.creativecommons.org>>, or view the South African drafts <<http://creativecommons.org/projects/international/za/>>.

### **More about the LINK Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand**

The LINK Centre is the leading information and knowledge hub providing training, research and consultancy in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) arena in order to develop public, private, NGO and community-based capacity within the Southern African region.

The institution focuses on capacity building in the public and private sectors and development arenas through quality training, applied research and consultancy services necessary to maximize the benefits of the Information Society and economy.

For more information, see <<http://link.wits.ac.za>>.

### **About Creative Commons**

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in early 2002, Creative Commons promotes the creative re-use of intellectual and artistic works – whether owned or in the public domain – by empowering authors and audiences. It is sustained by the generous support of the Center for the Public Domain, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Omidyar Network Fund, and the Hewlett Foundation.

For general information, visit <<http://creativecommons.org>>.

### **Contact**

Heather Ford  
Creative Commons South Africa  
[Ford.H@pdm.wits.ac.za](mailto:Ford.H@pdm.wits.ac.za)  
Phone: +27 11 717 3113  
Cell: +27 82 872 7374



## Press Release

Andrew Rens  
Creative Commons South Africa  
[andrewrens@yahoo.com](mailto:andrewrens@yahoo.com)

Glenn Otis Brown  
Executive Director  
Creative Commons  
[glenn@creativecommons.org](mailto:glenn@creativecommons.org)  
+1.415.336.1433

### Press Kit

<http://creativecommons.org/presskit/>