



## PRESS RELEASE

### **New Grants to Support African Business Reporting**

**Nairobi, Kenya, March 4, 2014** – The African Media Initiative ([AMI](#)) is pleased to announce new funding opportunities for business and technology stories in its pan-African journalism competition.

[The African Story Challenge](#) is now inviting applications from individual journalists and newsrooms with unique story ideas or projects on business and technology that can only be produced with substantial support.

The top twenty multimedia projects that show the best potential for adopting innovative storytelling techniques using data journalism tools, will be shortlisted for the final prize and will be awarded grants of up to \$20,000 to produce them for broadcast and publication.

Shortlisted stories will focus on any topical business and technology angle of interest to a wider African audience. The winning journalists and organisations will employ in-depth research and investigative journalism and engage in cross-platform approaches and interactive applications to ensure the story reaches as many people as possible on a variety of media devices.

The African Story Challenge advisory council comprising senior journalists and editors will oversee the shortlisting process. The projects that will be identified to be eligible for funding will be approved upon signature of a legal contract. The finalists will be brought together for intensive sessions to improve their project ideas.

An independent international panel of editors and media experts will judge the entries. Grantees who produce the best stories published or broadcast in media that reach African audiences will win cash prizes or a major reporting trip abroad.

The African Story Challenge is a project of the African Media Initiative (AMI), the continent's largest association of media owners and operators. AMI Content Development Director and former Knight International Journalism Fellow Joseph Warungu is leading the project. The Knight Fellowships are administered by the [International Center for Journalists \(ICFJ\)](#).

"This competition aims at encouraging and supporting African media to promote a better quality of life for our people by producing more and better stories on the issues that really matter" said Warungu, a former BBC Africa Editor. "Politics is important, but it's not everything."

AMI Chief Executive Amadou Mahtar Ba added, "It's widely acknowledged that Africa is on the rise and leading the way on many fronts such as mobile money. To continue telling this story of growth and innovation well, the media in Africa must be supported and strengthened. AMI is committed to this goal through the Story Challenge and by finding disruptive digital ideas for improving the way that news is collected and disseminated."

The African Story Challenge runs on thematic cycles. The first one was on Agriculture and Food Security and the second one, which is coming to an end, has been on Health. The new

cycle on Business and Technology was launched today with a panel discussion on business reporting in Africa organised jointly with the [Nairobi Securities Exchange](#) (NSE). The panel featured NSE Chief Executive Peter Mwangi, [IC Publications](#) Group Publisher and chair of the competition judging panel, Omar Ben Yedder, [Nation Media Group](#) NTV Business Editor Wallace Kantai, Alex Gakuru, Regional Coordinator for Africa of Creative Commons, and Andrea Bohnstedt, publisher of Ratio Magazine.

The African Story Challenge is supported by an \$800,000 grant from the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#). The programme also has support from the [African Development Bank](#), the [Rockefeller Foundation](#), Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa ([AGRA](#)), and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation ([Norad](#)).

**Ends....**

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