

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

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ATTENTION: News Editors and Journalists

The National Electronic Media Institute of SA (NEMISA) Partners with the .ZA Domain Name Authority (ZADNA) to bridge the digital skills gap in rural areas and townships across SA.

NEMISA and ZADNA have joined hands to execute a grassroots digital skills training partnership. The two entities, under the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, have signed a 3-year-long partnership agreement which will see the two parties harness their expertise to address the digital skills shortages within the country and with a particular focus on schools.

NEMISA's mandate is to be a sustainable skills training provider in digital technologies and creative media spaces. NEMISA targets in-school and out of school youth, women, people with disabilities, SMME's and communities in general.

ZA Domain Name Authority (ZADNA) is a State-Owned Entity established in section 59 of the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 2002 (Act 25 of 2002). It is accountable to its members and the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT). ZADNA is mandated to manage and administer the .za domain namespace, which is South Africa's internet country code top-level domain (ccTLD). <https://www.zadna.org.za>

Among other initiatives, the two entities have agreed to:

- i. Enhance their drive to deliver training to schools, districts, and local municipalities to benefit from the NEMISA training programmes.
- ii. Assist beneficiaries in constituting an online presence by increasing .za domains for schools and SMMEs.
- iii. Offer ZADNA advocacy support through its platforms.
- iv. Avail NEMISA Learning Management System to deliver online learning.
- v. Co-fund joint projects as may be identified from time to time.

NEMISA CEO Trevor Rammitlwa said: “Introducing rural and township schools to the online world in a more aggressive way will make a big dent in fighting the digital divide in South Africa. The partnership between NEMISA and ZADNA is the needed catalyst for this cause.”

As part of this exciting partnership between the two institutions, ZADNA has identified a need to digitise South African public schools by providing the “.za domain” name under the school.za second-level domain (SLD). During the first 12 months of piloting the project, 200 school domain names will be registered and connected. This will be followed by a further 734 public schools per year for the next two years and 734 public schools in the last year. A total of 2 400 schools during the life of the project will therefore have benefited.

According to Mr Molehe Wesi, CEO of ZADNA, the schools.za digitisation project aims to digitise South African public schools by providing .za domain names to transform education through a viable alternative mode of teaching and learning. “Through this initiative, as the Authority, we intend to ensure the learners build and mature their digital presence. The beneficiary schools will leverage these domain names as a platform for teaching and learning.

In addition, NEMISA coordinators will go to the schools to conduct digital literacy training to the educators and students.

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