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PRESS RELEASE

AFP FOUNDATION'S AFRICAN FACT-CHECKING PROJECT A WINNER OF AFRICAN NEWS INNOVATION CHALLENGE.

Africa Check - a brand new fact-checking website devised by the AFP Foundation – was today named one of the winners of the inaugural African News Innovation Challenge – an internationally-backed contest aimed at strengthening the best in journalism in Africa.

The first website in Africa set up both to carry out fact-checking and promote the practice of fact-checking in other media, Africa Check is run in partnership with the Journalism Department of the University of the Witwatersrand. It was officially launched in Johannesburg on 31 October 2012.

Since it was launched, Africa Check has already published a range of reports investigating and checking the claims made on topics from income inequality to the quality of the data about childhood vaccination rates in South Africa.

The African News Innovation Challenge is organised by the African Media Initiative (AMI).

The 20 winners, who were chosen from more than 500 entrants, will share a global grant of \$1 million dollars, and technical support for their projects.

“We are thrilled to be chosen as one of the winners of this contest. This will enable us to maintain and build up our work in South Africa, and hopefully to extend the project to other countries around Africa,” said AFP Foundation deputy director Peter Cunliffe-Jones, who devised and oversees the project.

Justin Arenstein, the manager of the ANIC contest said: “Africa’s media face some serious challenges, and each of our winners tries to solve a real-world problem that journalists are grappling with. This includes the public’s growing concern about the manipulation and accuracy of online content, plus concerns around the security of communications and of whistleblowers or journalistic sources,” he said.

As well as producing its own fact-checking reports, the site provides tips and advice for journalists on fact-checking and a library of databases and fact-checking tools. Being based at a university, it aims to spread the skills and practice of fact-checking among both student and working journalists.

For more information about the project please contact:

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Notes for editors: *AFP Foundation is the non-profit media training arm of the AFP news agency, set up in 2007 to promote press freedom and raise media standards. The African News Innovation Challenge is organised by the African Media Initiative (AMI).*