



I N V I T A T I O N

JIAS



Preserving the 'Publics Interest' at the SABC in the age of State capture: Democratizer or State Broadcaster?

Prior to democracy in 1994 the SABC was like all media in South Africa, it was regulated, owned, and controlled by the state and used as a key propaganda machine for creating and maintaining apartheid structures (Tomaselli 1994; Teer-Tomaselli 2001; Berger 2001). As the transformation of the South African political landscape took place, it was no longer an option for the SABC to be the voice of the apartheid government and it transitioned from a 'state broadcaster' to a 'public service broadcaster' (Orgeret 2006; Teer-Tomaselli 2001). Throughout democracy however the SABC has been accused of sliding back into being a 'state broadcaster', most recently it has become intertwined in the scandalous and serious political interferences in state-owned companies (SOCs), along with others such as South African Airways (SAA), ESKOM, Post Office, PRASA, which culminated in the release of the Zondo Commission's State Capture report in 2022. Public service broadcasting first developed in Britain because of the first director of the BBC John Reith's desire for independent broadcasting from government with the original idea to inform citizens by democratizing culture and politics. Using the *seven* founding conceptualizations of the characteristics of public service broadcasting: (1) *Universality and accessibility* (2) *Accessibility in terms of footprint and language* (3) *Diversity of and in programming* (4) *A distinct service* (5) *Institutional independence* (6) *Editorial and programming independence* (7) *Public sources of funding*, this seminar critically considers the Woes and Wins of the SABC since 1994, and whether the SABC has slid back into being a 'state broadcaster'? It also reflects on how the SABC can preserve its 'public interest' mandate in the age of South Africa's state capture and more broadly in a rising neo-liberal capitalist context where the 'public service' mandates of public service broadcasters worldwide are under threat.

SPEAKER ▪ **Dr Prinola Govenden** – Senior Research Fellow, Johannesburg Institute for Advanced Study (JIAS)

DISCUSSANT ▪ **Dr Kate Skinner** – Executive Director AIP (Association Independent Publishers)/Former Executive Director SANEF/ Founder SOS (Save our SABC) Campaign

CHAIR ▪ **Dr Mbongeni Msimanga** – Post Doctoral Research Fellow, Johannesburg Institute for Advanced Study (JIAS)

DATE ▪ **26 May 2023**

TIME ▪ **10:00 – 12:00 (SAST)**

FORMAT ▪ **In-person** and via **Zoom**

VENUE ▪ **The Johannesburg Institute for Advanced Study (JIAS)**, 1 Tolip Street, Westdene, Johannesburg.

Kindly note there are limited seats.

RSVP using the following link to indicate if you will be attending in-person or online: <https://forms.gle/c3PUN39xSPNEfGxw7>

Email vannessak@uj.ac.za if you encounter problems.