



Petition to the President of the Republic of South Africa to support *South African History Online*

Your Excellency,

I, the undersigned,

am writing to you to draw attention to the fact that South African History Online (“**SAHO**”) is on the verge of closing as we are unable to secure funding from the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, the National Lottery Commission, or other funders.

1. Our petition

We call on you to help SAHO by making it a special Presidential Project. We believe that such support of SAHO will enable the organisation to become self-sufficient within the next three years as it already has pre-existing partnership agreements with its university partners and support from its millions of users. Unfortunately, SAHO and our partners are currently struggling due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Our impact

Over the past 20 years, SAHO has become the largest public history project in the country, with close to 60 million visitors who using our website in the last ten years. The website plays an important role in supporting learning and teaching in the nation’s classroom and lecture theatres.

In addition, we work with community-based history and heritage programs and provide a platform for South Africans to tell their own stories. We have trained grassroots history and heritage groups to develop and build their own websites and we also help individuals and groups to design and publish their own books.

3. Our innovation and legacy

SAHO pioneered the use of internet technology to produce the history curriculum lessons which are used by thousands of students and teachers. We initiated and ran the Chief Albert Luthuli oral history program in partnership with the Department of Basic Education. This has become the largest oral history project in the country.

SAHO continues to promote the proposal made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to the government to give recognition to the role played by ordinary South Africans in the struggle against apartheid.

We hope that you will hear our plea to save SAHO.

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