

# PUBLIC NOTICE



Date: Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2026

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS COLLABORATING PARTNER FOR A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL OVER THE TOP SERVICES ON TRADITIONAL MEDIA AND SECTOR SUSTAINABILITY IN UGANDA

The Uganda Communications Commission UCC established under the Uganda Communications Act 2013 is mandated to regulate and promote the development of communications services in Uganda in a manner that ensures accessibility affordability efficiency fair competition and long-term sector sustainability.

In line with this mandate UCC intends to undertake a comprehensive study on the impact of Digital Over the Top (OTT) services on traditional media and the sustainability of the communications sector in Uganda. The study will generate independent and evidence-based insights on how OTT services including streaming platforms, social media, online video services, podcasts and digital news platforms are reshaping media consumption business models competition and regulatory dynamics. The findings of the study will inform proportionate and forward looking regulatory and policy interventions consistent with national development frameworks including the Digital Transformation Roadmap the Digital Uganda Vision the National Development Plan IV and Uganda Vision 2040.

It is against this background that UCC invites applications from competent and experienced academicians research teams faculties schools or consortia of academic and research institutions hereinafter referred to as the Collaborating Partner to jointly undertake this study.

The Collaborating Partner shall be engaged for a period not exceeding 6 (six) calendar months and will be expected to implement the study in accordance with the attached approved Terms of Reference.

### Application Requirements

Applicants must submit applications that must include: A Technical Proposal and A Financial Proposal prepared in strict conformity with the attached Terms of Reference.

### Submission Details

Applicants are to submit their applications that MUST include technical and financial proposals. Deadline for applications is **5.00PM on Friday 13th March 2026** in conformity with attached Terms of Reference. Submissions in PDF should be emailed to [research@ucc.co.ug](mailto:research@ucc.co.ug)

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For More Details

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE  
STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL OVER-THE-TOP (OTT) SERVICES ON  
TRADITIONAL MEDIA AND SECTOR SUSTAINABILITY IN UGANDA.**

**1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

The rapid advancement of digital technologies and internet-based platforms has fundamentally transformed the production, distribution, and consumption of media content globally. In Uganda, traditional media has historically played a central role in information dissemination, public education, cultural promotion, and democratic governance. However, increased penetration of smartphones, mobile broadband, and affordable data services has accelerated the uptake of digital Over-The-Top (OTT) services, including streaming platforms, social media, messaging applications, online video platforms, podcasts, and digital news aggregation services.

This shift has disrupted traditional media business models, advertising revenues, audience reach, and content production economics, while also altering the competitive and regulatory balance within the communications sector. Evidence from the Ex-post Regulatory Impact Assessment of the 2017 Television Licensing Framework points to growing structural and competitive pressures on licensed broadcasters arising from digital and internet-based content delivery models.

The transformation of the media ecosystem is taking place within the broader national digital development agenda, as articulated in the Digital Transformation Roadmap (FY2023/24–FY2027/28), the Digital Uganda Vision, Uganda Vision 2040, and the National Development Plan IV (NDP IV). These frameworks emphasize the role of ICTs, digital services, and creative industries in driving inclusive growth, innovation, and socio-economic transformation.

While OTT services present opportunities for innovation, expanded consumer choice, content diversity, and new forms of audience engagement, they also raise critical policy and regulatory questions related to fair competition, regulatory asymmetry, taxation, content standards, consumer protection, local content development, public interest obligations, and the long-term sustainability of the media sector.

The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), established under the Uganda Communications Act, 2013, is mandated to regulate and promote the development of communications services, including broadcasting and data services, in a manner that ensures accessibility, affordability, efficiency, and sustainability. In fulfilling this mandate, UCC requires robust, independent, and evidence-based research to better understand the evolving media landscape and to inform proportionate and forward-looking regulatory responses.

It is against this background that UCC seeks to partner with a competent team of Academicians (hereinafter referred to as the Collaborating Partner) to undertake a comprehensive collaborative study on the impact of digital OTT services on traditional media and sector sustainability in Uganda. The study is intended to generate policy-relevant evidence, strengthen local research capacity, and contribute to informed regulatory and sectoral decision-making.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The overall objective of this study is to assess the impact of digital Over-The-Top (OTT) services on traditional media in Uganda and to examine the implications for the sustainability, competitiveness, and governance of the media and communications sector.

More specifically this study shall aim to: -

1. Map the OTT media landscape and consumption patterns in Uganda by identifying major local and global platforms, their service offerings, pricing models, delivery mechanisms, and target audiences, and by assessing market penetration, adoption trends, usage frequency, demographic characteristics, and projected growth.
2. Identify and profile IP-TV services and non-licensed or unregulated operators, including radio, pay television, and other platforms providing access to content via the internet, satellite, or cable, and document their operational and content delivery models.
3. Examine changes in audience behavior and content consumption associated with the growth of OTT services and unlicensed broadcasting, including shifts in viewing and listening habits, platform preferences, time allocation across media, and the extent of displacement or convergence between digital and traditional media.
4. Assess the economic impact of OTT services and unlicensed operators on traditional media by analyzing effects on revenues, advertising flows, subscriptions, audience share, employment, and business sustainability of licensed broadcasters.
5. Examine regulatory, fiscal, and competitive dynamics between OTT service providers, unlicensed operators, and traditional media, including licensing, taxation, content regulation, compliance obligations, regulatory gaps, and implications for fair competition and market equity.
6. Assess the implications of OTT services and unlicensed broadcasting for local content production, cultural representation, and public interest media, including issues of content discoverability, diversity, misinformation, harmful content, data privacy, and consumer protection.
7. Capture consumer perspectives on media access, affordability, quality, trust, and satisfaction across OTT services, unlicensed platforms, and traditional media, while identifying barriers to access and opportunities for enhancing inclusion and user experience.
8. Document and analyze strategies adopted by traditional media to adapt to digital disruption, including innovation, convergence, partnerships, and alternative content delivery mechanisms, and assess their effectiveness in sustaining relevance and competitiveness.
9. Evaluate adherence to content standards, including age ratings, local content requirements, and relevant UCC guidelines, as well as compliance with data protection and privacy obligations under the Data Protection and Privacy Act, 2019.

10. Propose evidence-based policy, regulatory, and industry-level interventions aimed at promoting sector sustainability, innovation, fair competition, consumer protection, and effective collaboration between traditional, OTT, and emerging media operators.

### **3. SCOPE OF WORK AND COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES**

The Collaborating Partner shall undertake a comprehensive demand-side and market-oriented assessment of Uganda's media and communications sector, focusing on OTT services, IP-TV, non-licensed operators, and traditional media. The study shall employ a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative research, supported by extensive stakeholder engagement.

In executing this assignment, the Collaborating Partner shall, in collaboration with UCC: -

1. Conduct a desk review of relevant laws, policies, regulations, UCC guidelines, sector reports, academic literature, and international best practices relating to OTT services, broadcasting, media sustainability, and data protection.
2. Design, pre-test, and implement nationally representative surveys targeting media consumers, advertisers, and content creators.
3. Conduct Key Informant Interviews with regulators, policymakers, traditional media owners, OTT service providers, advertisers, and civil society organizations.
4. Facilitate Focus Group Discussions with media consumers and content creators across selected regions to explore consumption behavior, preferences, affordability, accessibility, and satisfaction.
5. Analyze audience behavior, content consumption patterns, advertising and revenue flows, employment impacts, and business models across traditional and digital platforms.
6. Assess regulatory, fiscal, and competitive frameworks to identify compliance gaps, enforcement challenges, and areas requiring regulatory adaptation.
7. Co-develop empirically grounded policy, regulatory, and strategic recommendations, and participate in validation workshops and structured knowledge transfer sessions with UCC.

### **4. STUDY DELIVERABLES**

The Collaborating Partner shall submit the following deliverables for review and approval by UCC: -

1. An Inception Report, including a detailed Inception Report outlining the research design, methodology, work plan, stakeholder mapping, timelines, and draft data collection instruments, together with a pre-test report.
2. A Stakeholder Consultation Report summarizing findings from Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, and other engagements, highlighting key insights on market dynamics, regulatory challenges, and media consumption trends.

3. Draft Study Report and Presentation Materials, presenting preliminary findings, analysis, and proposed recommendations, accompanied by presentation materials for Management and stakeholder validation.
4. Final Study Report and Knowledge Outputs, incorporating feedback from the validation workshop, cleaned datasets, analytical outputs in editable formats, and at least two publishable policy or academic papers derived from the study.
5. Knowledge Transfer and Dissemination Package, documenting knowledge-sharing sessions, workshop proceedings, and materials to support UCC's application of the study findings in regulatory and policy processes.

## **5. TIMELINE AND FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS**

The study shall be completed within a period not exceeding seven (7) calendar months from the commencement date. Funding and disbursement arrangements shall be guided by the collaborative research framework and applicable contractual provisions, subject to satisfactory completion and approval of agreed milestones and deliverables.

## **6. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE COLLABORATING PARTNER**

The Collaborating Partner shall demonstrate strong academic, technical, and sector-specific expertise to ensure credible, policy-relevant, and evidence-based delivery of the study objectives. Applications may be submitted by individual academicians, Academia research teams, faculties, schools, or consortia of institutions.

### **6.1 Collaborating Partner Level Qualifications**

The proposed Collaborating Partner must demonstrate the following:

1. **Academic and Research Credibility:** Demonstrated expertise in ICT, broadcasting, digital media, telecommunications policy, management, media economics, or closely related disciplines, supported by peer-reviewed publications and applied research outputs relevant to OTT services, media markets, or digital transformation.
2. **Relevant Sector Experience:** At least five (5) years of experience conducting research, policy studies, market assessments, or regulatory impact analyses in the communications, broadcasting, or digital media sectors. Experience with OTT services, IP-TV, audience research, advertising markets, or media sustainability studies will be a distinct advantage.
3. **Collaborative Research Capacity:** Proven ability to work collaboratively with regulators, policymakers, industry stakeholders, and civil society actors, including experience in joint research initiatives, policy dialogue, or commissioned studies for public sector institutions.
4. **Methodological Strength:** Demonstrated capacity to design and implement mixed-methods research, including nationally representative surveys, qualitative interviews, focus group discussions, economic and financial analysis, and policy or regulatory assessments.

5. **Institutional Affiliation and Stability:** The Collaborating Partner Lead must be affiliated to a legally registered and accredited academic or research institution. Where a consortium is proposed, clear governance arrangements and institutional commitments must be demonstrated.
6. **Regional and International Perspective:** Experience in comparative or benchmarking studies involving OTT regulation, digital media governance, or broadcasting policy in Africa or comparable jurisdictions will be an added advantage.

## **6.2 Individual Team Qualifications**

The proposed research team shall comprise of at least five (5) to six (6) key professionals with complementary skills. At a minimum, the team should meet the following requirements:

### **1. Team Leader / Lead Collaborating Partner**

- a) **Qualifications:** PhD in Media Studies, Communication Studies, Economics/statistics or Data science, Telecommunications, Management, ICT Policy, Public Policy, or a closely related field.
- b) **Experience:** Minimum of ten (10) years of academic or applied research experience in ICT, broadcasting, media, or digital services.
- c) **Publications:** At least ten (10) peer-reviewed publications relevant to ICT, media, or digital policy.
- d) **Role:** Overall coordination, methodological oversight, quality assurance, synthesis of findings, and leadership of policy and regulatory recommendations.

### **2. Broadcasting and OTT Services Expert**

- a) **Qualifications:** Master's degree in Telecommunications, ICT, Computer Science, Media Technology, or related field.
- b) **Experience:** At least seven (7) years' experience in OTT platforms, IP-TV services, digital content delivery, or broadcasting technologies.
- c) **Role:** Mapping and analysis of OTT platforms, IP-TV services, and unlicensed operators.

### **3. Regulatory, Policy, and Legal Expert**

- a) **Qualifications:** Master's degree in law, Regulatory Economics, Public Policy, or Media Governance.
- b) **Experience:** At least seven (7) years in ICT or broadcasting regulation, licensing, taxation frameworks, or content governance.
- c) **Role:** Analysis of regulatory asymmetries, compliance, competition issues, and development of regulatory recommendations.

#### **4. Financial and Economic Analyst**

- a) Qualifications: Master's degree in economics, Finance, Business Administration, or related field.
- b) Experience: At least seven (7) years in market analysis, advertising revenue assessment, financial modeling, or socio-economic impact studies.
- c) Role: Assessment of economic and financial impacts on traditional media sustainability.

#### **5. Consumer and Market Research Specialist**

- a) Qualifications: Master's degree in social sciences, Communications, Marketing, or related field.
- b) Experience: At least five (5) years in survey design, FGDs, audience research, and media consumption analysis.
- c) Role: Design and implementation of consumer research and audience behavior analysis.

### **7. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Applications submitted under this Call for a Collaborating Partner will be evaluated using the following criteria:

#### **1. Technical and Academic Merit**

- a) Demonstrated understanding of the study objectives, scope, and regulatory context of OTT services and traditional media in Uganda.
- b) Clarity, coherence, and feasibility of the proposed technical approach and methodology.
- c) Appropriateness of proposed data collection tools, sampling strategies, and analytical frameworks.

#### **2. Relevant Experience and Track Record**

- a) Evidence of prior involvement in similar studies on OTT services, digital media, broadcasting markets, or regulatory impact assessments.
- b) Quality and relevance of previous research outputs, including peer-reviewed publications, policy reports, or commissioned studies.

#### **3. Team Composition and Competence**

- a) Academic qualifications, sector expertise, and research experience of the proposed team members.

- b) Balance of skills across technical, regulatory, economic, and consumer research domains.
- c) Availability and commitment of key personnel for the duration of the study.

#### **4. Collaborative Research Capacity**

- a) Demonstrated ability to engage stakeholders effectively and work collaboratively with UCC and sector actors.
- b) Experience in knowledge transfer, policy engagement, and translation of research into actionable regulatory insights.

#### **5. Financial and Implementation Feasibility**

- a) Realism and justification of the proposed budget and work plan.
- b) Alignment of the financial proposal with the proposed methodology, timeline, and deliverables.

#### **6. Institutional Arrangements (where applicable)**

- a) For team or consortium applications, clarity of institutional roles, governance arrangements, and coordination mechanisms.
- b) Submission of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between collaborating institutions, where applicable.

### **8. REPORTING AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Collaborating Partner shall report to UCC through a designated Contract Manager. Overall oversight shall be provided by the Director responsible for ICT and Research to ensure alignment with UCC's strategic and regulatory priorities.

### **9. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, DISCLOSURE, AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

All data, instruments, analytical outputs, and reports produced under this study shall remain the property of the Uganda Communications Commission. The Collaborating Partner shall sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement and shall ensure confidentiality and secure handling of all study-related information.