17 March 2015
Media release

KZN ARTS AND CULTURE LAUNCHES MZANSI ONLINE PROJECT

Three libraries in KwaZulu-Natal have been earmarked to benefit from an international grant which will see them being allocated 20 computers (10 public use, three for games, two for the visually impaired and five for office use), printers, tablets and e-Readers, among other equipment. The Mzansi Online Project, which is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, also includes training of library staff on the use of information and communication technology.

24 other public libraries across the country will also benefit from this R32 million project. Each province was required to select three libraries, in KZN the focus was on rural areas which led to Sazi Nelson [KwaNdwalane], Maphumulo and Osizweni being selected. Each library will receive equipment determined by the needs identified by the provincial library authority estimated at R470 000.

The project is being launched for the first time in KZN today KwaNdwalane under Hibiscus Municipality as part of celebrations to mark SA library Week. MEC Ntombikayise Sibhidla-Saphetha together with Deputy Minister for Arts and Culture Rejoice Mabudafhasi have handed over the equipment to the Sazi Nelson library as well as books to a high school in the area.

SA library week runs from the 14th to the 21st of March, this year’s theme is “Connect @ your library”. It has a specific focus on how libraries can be used as social spaces for people to connect within their communities, using technology to connect with the rest of the world and how technology can be used by people to change their socio-economic circumstances.