

[HOME](#)[ABOUT US](#)[CURRENT PROJECTS](#)[WORK WITH US](#)[LINKS](#)[CONTACTS](#)[NEWS](#)

[Home](#) » [About us](#) » [History & objectives](#)

## HISTORY & OBJECTIVES

The Constitutional Court Trust was established in 1995 to manage funds donated in support of the newly established Constitutional Court. These monies were initially used to fund law clerks for judges of the Court. The Trust has since embarked on various other projects in pursuit of its general objective, namely to promote the rule of law, constitutionalism and judicial independence in the African region – while its main focus remains on the Constitutional Court of South Africa.

The Trust operates on a charitable, not for profit basis, and is independent of both the Court and Government.

The Law Clerks' Programme was established to provide high calibre professional assistance to Constitutional Court judges while also providing experience and training to promising young lawyers. This programme is now fully funded by the Department of Justice.

The Trust administers two fellowships for postgraduate legal study for former law clerks, namely:

The Franklin Thomas Fellowship

This is funded from an endowment raised by friends and colleagues in honour of Franklin Thomas, former President of the Ford Foundation.

The fellowship is granted annually to fund studies in the USA.

The Ismail Mahomed Fellowship was established to honour the memory of the late Judge Ismail Mahomed, a founding member of the Constitutional Court and later Chief Justice, and is funded from an endowment granted by Atlantic Philanthropies. The fellowship is granted annually to a South African lawyer who has served as a law clerk at the Constitutional Court or the Supreme Court of Appeal and who has demonstrated a commitment to the promotion of human rights.

The Southern African Legal Information Institute (SAFLII) provides a growing body of users, free, full and anonymous access to primary legal materials from the South African courts and tribunals, and other jurisdictions in southern and east Africa. SAFLII's current collection of material comprises over 35,000 judgments.

African law clerkship programme. In order to enhance experience in constitutional justice across the continent, the Trust annually sponsors a law graduate from an African country to work as a judge's law clerk for one year.

The Southern African Chief Justices Forum was established by Chief Justices from countries in South and East Africa to promote the rule of law and independent judiciaries in member countries. The Trust provided funding and administrative services at inception.

The Trust has helped the Constitutional Court Library to augment its collection of reference materials and to create a remotely accessible, digital library.

More recently, the Trust has funded the beginnings of a "constitution-making" archive, which aims to collect and house important collections of documents related to negotiations and CODESA and the making of the South African Constitution.

The Trust owns an extraordinary collection of artworks donated by prominent artists and other benefactors to celebrate the Court's role in the transition to democracy. Works by artists Marlene Dumas, Gerard Sekoto, William Kentridge, Dumile Feni, Judith Mason, Willie Bester, Cecil Skotnes, Hamilton Budaza, Kim Berman, Sue Williamson, Anton van Wouw, John Baloyi, Andrew Verster, Marc Chagall, and many others form part of the collection which attracts many visitors to the Court.

The work of the Trust has been supported by the generous assistance of a number of partners and funders.