

BOTSWANA COMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY



**APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL FM RADIO
BROADCASTING LICENCE**

CLOSING DATE:08 JANUARY 2027

**BOTSWANA COMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY
PRIVATE BAG 00495
GABORONE
PLOT 50671,
INDEPENDENCE AVENUE STREET,
GABORONE**

The Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA) or the Authority hereby invites organisations and interested registered entities to submit applications for Commercial FM Radio Broadcasting licence.

The objective of the Invitation To Apply (ITA) is to invite potential Radio Stations that will augment the already existing players and further promote media diversity, enhance information dissemination and stimulate a more competitive broadcasting space.

Applications and all supporting documents should be submitted not later than **12:00hrs** on **08 January 2027** or such other later date as the Authority may advise in writing, in the “**Tender Box**” located at the following address:

**Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority Plot 50671
Independence Avenue Gaborone**

Applicants are required to pay a non-refundable Licence Application Fee of **One Thousand, One Hundred and Forty Pula (P1,140.00), VAT Inclusive** to BOCRA on submission of the application and proof of payment or payment receipt shall be attached to the application document. **Failure to pay Licence Application fee will result in the application not being evaluated.** Payment must be made in the form of bank transfer or deposit at the following bank details:

Bank Name:	First National Bank Botswana Ltd		
Branch Name:	Mall		
Branch Code:	28-28-67		
Account Name:	Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority		
Bank Account No:	62011115088	Swift Code:	FIRNBWGX
Reference:	BTA0002	Payment From:	COMPANY NAME

Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing, the Authority is not bound to accept any application.

For any further information regarding the ITA, contact: **Licensing Department**
Office at: licensing@bocra.org.bw or via telephone at **368 5500**.

1. Clarifications on the Application Requirements

- 1.1 Clarifications sought on the ITA may be submitted through email to **licensing@bocra.org.bw** and must be sent and/or received by **14 December 2026** or such other later date as BOCRA may advise.
- 1.2 BOCRA shall produce a Clarification Document in response to all questions or requests for clarity received and send it to the prospective applicants not later than **21 December 2026**.
- 1.3 Applicants will not be reimbursed for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their applications.
- 1.4 BOCRA and UASF Board Members are prohibited from bidding or being part of or associated with a bidding company/team for any licences/supplies/services/works contract with the Authority.
- 1.5 Application documents shall not be returned to the Applicants at the end of the evaluation and adjudication processes.
- 1.6 Faxed or emailed applications shall not be considered.

End of ITA Notice

2.0 Background

- 2.1. The Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority, herein after referred to as (BOCRA) or the Authority, is mandated through the

Communications Regulatory Authority Act (CRA Act) [No. 19 of 2012] to regulate broadcasting services in Botswana.

- 2.2.** To promote innovation and competition BOCRA is desirous of licensing new players who will innovate, adapt to changing media consumption habits, enhance competition as well as encourage diversity of editorial voices and programming formats.
- 2.3.** The award of the licences will further address gaps in geographical coverage where existing stations may not adequately serve other communities.
- 2.4.** In view of the foregoing, the Authority desires to license **Two (2) Regional Commercial FM Radio Broadcasting stations** with prospect of progression to National Coverage subject to the successful implementation and completion of their respective regional coverage rollout plans.

3.0 Commercial Radio Broadcasting

3.1 A Commercial Radio Broadcasting service means a service which is:

- 3.1.1. profit oriented, operates like a business and generates income primarily through advertising and sponsorship;
- 3.1.2. usually owned by private entities and companies or media groups; and

3.1.3. usually covers wide audiences with content designed to attract largest listenership.

4.0 Ownership and Control of Commercial FM Radio Broadcasting

4.1 A person shall not directly or indirectly own or exercise control over more than one commercial FM Radio broadcasting station.

4.2 An FM Radio broadcasting licence shall be reserved for enterprises which are owned by citizens or in which citizens have a significant shareholding (at least 80 per cent shareholding).

5.0 Licensing Criteria

5.1 There are two licences available in the Regions illustrated on Table 1 below.

5.2 Under licence 1: The successful applicant will be required to rollout services in Molepolole, Kgalagadi and Borolong before proceeding to cover the Gaborone region

5.3 Under Licence 2: The successful applicant will only proceed to rollout services in the Francistown region once the Boteti and Chobe regions have been covered.

Table 1: Available licences

	Region	Major Town	Other places
Licence 1	Molepolole	Molepolole	Thamaga, Moshupa, Letlhakeng, Takatokwane, Sojwe, Lephepe
	Borolong	Goodhope	Metlojane, Mmathethe, Phitshane Molopo, Mabule, Ramatlabama

	Kgalagadi	Ghanzi	Kang, Hukuntsi, Tsabong, Werda, Bokspits, Sekoma, Morwamosu, New Xhade
	Gaborone	*Gaborone	Gaborone, Mochudi, Tlokweng, Ramotswa, Gabane, Mogoditshane
Licence 2	Chobe	Kasane	Kazungula, Pandamatenge, Lesoma, Nata, Gweta
	Boteti	Orapa	Letlhakane, Rakops, Mmatshumu, Xhumaga, Sowa
	Francistown	*Francistown	Francistown, Tonota, Masunga, Tutume, Mathangwane

6.0 Application Rules

6.1 Applicants should propose a roll out plan to achieve at least 50% population coverage of the regions within the two (2) year licence period.

6.2 Applications should include transmitter locations to maximise coverage.

6.3 Applicants can propose additional small/underserved villages not included in the regions.

7. General Eligibility Requirements

7.1 The Authority will issue the licences to applicants who meet the eligibility and regulatory requirements, including technical standards, local content requirements and public interest.

7.2 The prerequisites for obtaining a licence to operate a

Commercial Radio Broadcasting station are described below;

- 7.3 Applicants must submit a Business plan which **outlines the financial capacity and sustainability of the station.**
- 7.4 Applicants must submit Programming schedules showing the proposed content to be aired, target audience and other relevant information.
- 7.5 Applicants must provide Technical details to demonstrate their technical competence or capability to operate and manage the broadcasting equipment and infrastructure.
- 7.6 Applicants must submit financial records (certified bank statements) and other relevant documentation to demonstrate their ability to finance the station set-up and operations.
- 7.7 Applicants should have a physical local presence in Botswana.

8.Licence Validity

- 8.1 The Authority will issue a Provisional Regional Commercial FM Radio Broadcasting licence valid for a period of two (2) years from the Licence date. A Long-term Regional Commercial FM Radio Broadcasting Licence of fifteen (15) years will only be issued to a Licensee after an assessment of their performance in market, including achievement of at least 50% of their roll out obligations upon expiry of the Provisional Licence.

8.2 The licence shall remain in effect for the duration, unless suspended or revoked by the Authority.

9.0 Local Content

9.1 Local Content means the output or results of a regulated sectors' production that have been produced using material or resources gathered in Botswana. Local content does not cover news.

9.2 Local Content quota shall not be below 60% and may be revised from time to time. The content must reflect the diverse needs and interests of the target listenership.

10.0 Political funding

10.1 Political funding and advertising from political parties or electoral candidates is prohibited **except** during the election period as per the Code of Conduct for Broadcasting During Elections.

11.0 Technical Specifications and Key Deliverables

11.1 Make and model of each proposed transmitter;

11.2 Proposed effective radiated power (ERP);

11.3 Proposed power output;

11.4 Proposed antenna polarisation;

11.5 Antenna gain;

11.6 Proposed horizontal broadcasting pattern;

11.7 Type of antenna;

11.8 Physical address (if any) of location of proposed transmitter;

- 11.9 Geographical co-ordinates or map reference of transmitter's position;
- 11.10 Site height above sea level;
- 11.11 Effective antenna height above site;
- 11.12 Kind of studio equipment to be used by the broadcasting services;
- 11.13 Licensee shall ensure that the broadcasting equipment complies with the relevant International Telecommunication Union (ITU) recommendations for Region 1 and;
- 11.14 Name, address, qualifications of person/s who will be in charge of technical matters.

12. Start Of Licence

- 12.1 The Applicant shall indicate their expected date for commencement of operations.

13.0 Other Licence Obligations

13.1 Monitoring & Compliance

13.1.1 There shall be procedures for monitoring and assessing compliance with licensing conditions and enforcement mechanisms for non-compliance, including application of a Penalty Framework. The Framework shall encompass warnings, fines, or licence revocations and shall be applied as determined by the Authority.

13.1.2 Broadcasters shall adhere to the existing Codes that govern the broadcasting sector, including but not limited to Code of Conduct for Broadcasters, Code of Conduct for Advertising, and Code of Conduct for Elections Coverage.

13.2 Licence Fees

13.2.1 The annual Broadcasting Service fee shall be one percent (1%) of the Annual Net Turnover, paid quarterly in arrears based on the Net Turnover reported for each quarter.

13.2.2 An Annual Radio Licence fee per transmitter shall be paid on or before the licence expiry date, governed by the terms and conditions of the Radio Licence, subject to review in accordance with any new radio licence fee structures which may be introduced under Section 45 of the Act.

13.2.3 The fees paid in terms of the licence will attract Value Added Tax (VAT).

14.0 Application Evaluation

14.1 Application evaluation shall consider the conformity of Applications to the application requirements. The criteria for evaluation shall be as shown on Table 2 below.

Table 2: Proposal guidelines

EVALUATION CRITERIA	EVALUATION CRITERIA DESCRIPTION
1. Organisational Structure	Applicants must provide clear station management strategies: • Copies of Certificate of company registration issued by the Companies Intellectual Property Authority (CIPA) Registration will be verified through the CIPA online portal. • Attach a Shareholder Agreement stating the control of and/or veto rights in the company. • Provide names and citizenship of key skilled personnel for Station management (Station Manager and relevant expertise responsible for Programming, Technical matters, Finance, News/Reporting, Marketing). <i>NB: citizen participation will be an added advantage</i> • Attach Curricula Vitae (CVs) and Certificates of key personnel • Describe roles of key personnel • Provide Organisational structure of the station in the form of an organogram and indicate how the station will be operated • Attach Curriculum Vitae's (CVs) of the owners/Shareholders.

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	• Maximum of 2 designated Contact persons (Physical address, Postal address, Telephone number and email address) • Provide proposed name of station.
2.The Market - Objectives of the Station	Applicants must clearly indicate the objectives of the station including but not limited to: • Population profile of the licence area. • The targeted audience. • The type of content to be aired. • Applicants must describe uniqueness of the proposed content and explain how it will add to the diversity of radio broadcasting in the licence area.
3.Broadcast Technology (Terrestrial) - Technical capability	Applicants must provide the following information on the Technical set-up: • Antenna location(s) (place (owned or rented), geographical coordinates) • Effective Radiated Power (ERP) • Proposed power output. • Antenna type, gain and height. • Intended coverage radius. • Proposed horizontal broadcasting pattern • Kind of studio equipment to be used by the broadcasting service and shall ensure that the broadcasting equipment complies with the relevant ITU recommendations for Region 1. • The maintenance plan of transmitters; • Recording equipment. • Backup solutions - measures to ensure the continuous running of stations in case of technical problems.

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	Applicants must provide information of the technical capability (qualifications and relevant certificates) of running and maintaining the station: the technical support personnel (inhouse or outsourced).
4.Mitigation of Risk	Applicants must highlight any anticipated challenges or risks that may arise during the running of the station, and must, Clearly indicate Challenges/Risks, Risk Owner, Likelihood of the Risk, Impact and Mitigation measures.
5.Coverage Area/ Roll-out	Applicants must clearly state the Regions selected (maximum of 3) as illustrated on Table 1 above. - Applicants must list towns and villages in each Region to be served, with clear indications of the timelines on which each transmitter will be rolled out. - Applicants must provide Maps showing geographical boundaries of the areas of coverage – the licence area.
6.Financial Capability and Management	Applicants must provide details of costs for running a Station and the available financial resources: - A three (3) year financial Projection plan covering: - Estimated cost of the Capital investment to set-up the station (initial funding); - Estimated cost of the operational running of the station (operational sustainability); and - Funding strategies. - Attach three months certified bank statement or commitment letters (stating the amount of

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	sponsorship) supported by three months certified bank statements from funder(s), or sponsor(s).
7.Programming and content Plan	Applicants must provide details on the nature and types of programmes: • Attach a programme schedule. • Indicate proposed local content quota which shall not be below 60%. The content must reflect the diverse needs and interests of the target listenership. • The overall music and programs to be broadcast including the anticipated percentage of local content to be aired. • Diversity & inclusivity in programming. • Languages to be used and sources of programming. • Editorial policy or content supervision of the station. • Mechanisms in place to monitor content of incoming calls during call-in programs (where applicable).

Note: Applicants are advised to submit all the required information and documents as well as to comply with all conditions stipulated on this document, failing which shall result in disqualification or loss of marks during the evaluation of applications. The Authority will not request for additional information or missing document (s) or request for clarification from Applicants during the application evaluation process.

15.0 Licence Award

15.1 The award of the licence is the prerogative of BOCRA. The licence will be awarded to the most compliant Applicant whose application meets all the Application requirements and is considered by BOCRA to be the best fit for adding value to the broadcasting sector.

16.0. Communication of Evaluation and Award Outcomes

16.1 Following the evaluation, adjudication and award processes, applicants will be notified in writing as to whether they have been successful or not.

16.2 Any applicant who wishes to ascertain the grounds for not being successful should formally request for feedback from the Authority within a period of 10 working days post communication of award. Following such a request, BOCRA shall provide feedback, either in writing or through a debriefing meeting. The requesting applicant shall bear all costs of attending the debriefing meeting.

16.3 The successful Applicant(s) will be issued with a Licence and the Roll-out and technical specifications submitted with the applications shall form part of the licence.