**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

 **FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

 **QUESTION NO 572**

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**QUESTION PAPER NO 05-2018**

**Ms NR Mashabela (EFF) to ask the Minister of Science and Technology:

(1) Does her department have a working relationship with Mr Melusi Ntuli, who invented a chargeless electric engine, which is 100% green technology, if so, (a) what are the details of the specified relationship, (b) how is her department assisting him in developing and making prototypes of this invention and (c) what amount of funding has her department allocated towards this project? NW640E

REPLY:**

(1) Does her department have a working relationship with Mr Melusi Ntuli, who invented a chargeless electric engine, which is 100% green technology, if not why not?

The department established the Grassroots Innovation Programme as a means to improve access and participation in the national system of innovation. This programme specifically targets innovators who are not part of formal institutions of innovation nor have access to formal facilities critical for their innovative solutions. The department appointed the Technology Localization Implementation Unit (TLIU), of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) as an implementing agent of the Grassroots Innovation Programme. When Mr. Ntuli approached the department requesting assistance with the development of his invention in 2016, the department swiftly responded and advised him to enroll in the Grassroots Innovation Programme. As this programme was implemented by the CSIR's TLIU, all participants of this programme entered into a contractual relationship with the CSIR. Mr. Ntuli duly signed a contract on 24 April 2016. The contractual relationship between Mr. Ntuli and the CSIR was terminated at Mr. Ntuli's insistence. The termination was finalized by 21 July 2017.

Prior to voluntarily terminating the contractual relationship which effectively ended his participation as a beneficiary of the Grassroots Innovation Programme, Mr. Ntuli was receiving prototype design assistance from the Durban University of Technology; had been provided with computer aided design equipment; had been profiled nationally and participated at the India Festival of Innovation, a platform intended to assist innovators to market and profile their innovations in India.

(2) if so, (a) what are the details of the specified relationship?

Since Mr. Ntuli's insistence of terminating the contractual relationship, there is no longer a relationship between him and the department. The department in its communication with indicating him that he is still . welcome to participate in the Grassroots Innovation Programme within its existing terms and conditions.

(b) how is her department assisting him in developing and making prototypes of his invention?

The Grassroots Innovation Programmes funds prototype development, technical training e.g. machining and tooling, computer aided design, markets and profiles innovation to raise awareness, etc. It does not fund accommodation costs nor does it pay stipends.

(c) what amount of funding has her department allocated towards his project.

The assistance granted by the programme to Mr. Ntuli is valued at R205 096.00 and covered the payment for prototype development, design and machining expertise, provision of management development support and training as well as marketing and profiling his innovation. This amount excludes the costs of CSIR and DST staff who assisted Mr. Ntuli in the development of his networks and for marketing his innovation.